

Sale of autograph letters and MSS

Sarah Bradford

At Christie's, London, on February 23, the final curtain rang down on the duel of wits between those titanic theatrical egos, George Bernard Shaw and Mrs Patrick Campbell. "Mrs Pat" letters to Shaw were sent for sale by her grandson, including ten which were hitherto unpublished and seven only partly published.

Shaw's relationship with Stella Campbell was, as his biographer Michael Holroyd points out, unique in his later life. In contrast to his customary sexual shadow-boxing, Shaw was physically attracted to Mrs Patrick Campbell, although he later "covered up this un-Shavian lapse by commenting 'In this relationship I was acting so well that I forgot I was acting at all'." He was fifty-five and his voluptuous, maddeningly enchanting forty-four when he fell in love with her in the summer of 1912. The actress was ill and confined to her house, as appears in an unpublished, undated pencil note in the correspondence, they indulged in some teasing kissing and cuddling in an armchair by the fire. Shaw was infatuated:

And I love you for ever and ever, Stella. And I agree that when you are well we shall be Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mrs. Patrick Campbell; for Stella means only Stella; but Mrs. Patrick Campbell will mean my treasure, my darling, my beloved, adored, ensnared friend of my very soul. Oh, before you go, my Stella, I clasp you to my heart "with such a strained purity".

Stella responded to these effusions by calling him "Joey" after the clown in the pantomime, but, as far as Shaw was concerned, the purity of his designs became ever more strained until at Sandwick, in August 1913, he appeared at Stella's hotel intent upon seduction. Stella, who had already slammed the door in the face of his

passion in London in June, turned him down finally by fleeing the hotel, leaving a curt note. "Joey" letters to Stella several years later:

But as the years went by the tables were turned. Shaw became increasingly prosperous; Stella, having lost her looks and her husband, was in constant need of money and attempted to capitalize on her relationship with Shaw. At first she demanded parts in his plays which he was not prepared to give her; he refused to allow her to play Hesione Hushabye in *Heartbreak House* although the character was modelled upon her, while he showered her with well-merited criticism when she went over the top as an elderly Eliza in *Pygmalion* in 1920.

Their fiercest running battles were fought over Stella's attempts to turn Shaw's love letters to her into cash, first using them to spice her memoirs, then trying to sell them for publication. At first Shaw, visualizing a few innocuous passages, offered to help; but when he realized the full extent of Stella's intended revelations he was appalled. "You say you will behave like a perfect gentleman," he wrote furiously, "Well, a gentleman does not kiss and tell; so that settles that". Neither of the two parties were "nature's gentlemen"; Shaw's scruples arose from his fear of his wife's reactions. Charlotte Shaw did not like Mrs Campbell and was easily roused to fury on the subject; her husband descended to minutiae in the cuts which he demanded to avert her wrath. From a typescript copy of passages to be cut from the memoirs it appears that the excisions included such apparently uncontroversial stuff as his report from Bad Kissingen on July 3, 1912, that Charlotte and her sister "slept heavily" and that Charlotte was worried about her weight. All his precautions, however, came to nothing when the

New York *Herald* published the memoirs uncut in May 1922, and one can sympathize with Shaw when he wrote to Stella several years later:

If you knew the trouble those unlucky letters made for me you would understand a lot of things. I don't regret it; and it doesn't matter as it got you out of your difficulties for a moment; but O Lord, Stella, it mustn't happen again until we are both dead. Then we can be added to Heloise and Abelard and all the rest of them.

Stella, impecunious and alone, had no such inhibitions; cash present in the hand was of more moment than posthumous romantic fame. "The other day a publisher valued the letters at £10,000 and the publishing rights at £20,000," she wrote to Shaw on July 14, 1931. "What arrangements can we make, you and I? You know I am to be trusted." With ample evidence of her trustworthiness, Shaw cabled back: "Publication impossible. Sell letters keeping copies if you must but after Terry and Harris neither I nor the market can bear any more." Shaw was determined that the letters should not be published in full until after his and Charlotte's deaths, but he was generous enough to send Stella's letters back to her so that she could sell the complete correspondence for the benefit of her grandchildren. Mrs. Pat, however, processed him, dying impoverished at Pau in 1940, aged seventy-two, alone but for the last and best-loved of her tiny dogs, Moonbeam. "and it is my desire," she stipulated in her will, "should the copyright be free or permission obtained... should the Bernard Shaw letters... should be published in an independent volume to be entitled 'The Love Letters of Bernard Shaw to Mrs Patrick Campbell' so that all who may read them will realize that the friendship was 'L'amitié amoureuse'." Twelve years after her death the correspondence was published but Stella still did not get her way. The title

of the volume was a cautious and unexceptionable *Bernard Shaw and Mrs Patrick Campbell: Their Correspondence* (edited by Alan Dent, Gollancz, 1952).

Stella's descendants withheld from publication the letters which dealt with her disastrous second marriage to George Cornwallis-West, ten years after his divorce from Jennie Churchill and deserted her in 1919. Apart from the coyly teasing note mentioned above, they relate to her second husband's cruelty and her reaction to Shaw's exploitation of her experiences as Orintha in *The Apple Cart*: "it was agonizing - I am not yet old enough to look back on it as a joke," she wrote; and on July 12, 1929: "You hit below the belt when you juggle with gossip about my dead son; it damns you as nothing else can...". Stung, Shaw noted in pencil on the margin that he was thinking of "two reproaches, sons of beautiful actresses", not of Stella's. Beo, "though he too was not a Vicar of Wakefield. Think what it is for a boy to have such a mother?" And so the punching and counter-punching continued until the protagonists were eighty-three and seventy-four. The letters were finally sold, as he wished, for the benefit of her grandson whom he called the "Lord Chancellor" (£7,560 to Christopher Wood).

The sale also included a major and largely unpublished collection of letters by Somerset Maugham to his friend, the painter Sir Gerald Kelly. Kelly, a handsome Irishman of considerable artistic talent and interesting bohemian associations, first met Maugham in the summer of 1904. Maugham, according to his biographer, Ted Morgan, took to him at once; not only because he was unconventional and an artist but also because he was short like himself. Maugham took a generous interest in Kelly, loading him with artistic and practical advice and even funding his trip to Burma in 1908. In return the gregarious Kelly introduced him to the

Anglo-American artistic circle which met in an upstairs room at the Club Blanc café in Montparnasse, a fertile ground for ideas and characters in Maugham novels. Kelly himself was the original of Lawson in *Of Human Bondage*.

Kelly remained one of Maugham's closest friends and in the correspondence, mainly dating from 1904-20, Maugham discussed his own professional successes and difficulties, including those with *The Magician*, rejected at the instance of a shocked partner of Methuen's who read it and countermanded its publication although it was already set up in type; and with *The Explorer* - another cynical attempt at potboiling, this time on the Kipling bandwagon. Maugham worshipped money but was still capable of gagging in the process, writing to Kelly of *The Explorer* on March 25, 1907: "I vomited daily at the exalted sentiments that issued from their lips, & my hair stood on end at the delicacy of their sense of honour". Is that year Kelly painted the object of his friend's happiest heterosexual love, Ethelwyn Sylvia Jones, the original of Rosie in *Cakes and Ale*. Maugham kept Rosie's identity secret all his life; Kelly was the first to reveal it, under conditions of the strictest secrecy, to the writer Richard Cordell in 1939. "All I know is that they had a very happy love affair together," he wrote. "And then after a while I think Maugham became aware of her promiscuous nature. Whether they quarrelled and quarrelled, or whether he left her, or she left him, I neither know nor care. She was one of the most delightful women I have ever known. I thought her wonderfully beautiful but she had one failing." Kelly painted several portraits of Maugham who might have married "Rosie" but for that weakness. Instead Maugham married Syrie Wellcome and the traces of that tortured marriage are seen in this correspondence in the form of a fierce tirade against her. The collection was bought, again by Christopher Wood, for £6,480.

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Arthur among his peers

John Bayley

NORMAN PAGE (Editor)

Tennyson: Interviews and Recollections
202pp, Macmillan, £17.50.
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Genius can coexist with, and as it were make use of, any kind of personality; but that personality must somehow be experienced - "burned through" in Keats's phrase - in the productions of genius. In the case of Mozart, Raphael, or Shakespeare, it is hard to know whether the personality through which genius emerged was present in any sense to the artist himself. But in general the artist makes a conscious and cunning use of what he knows himself to be like. Goethe exploits his own shamelessness, Thomas Mann his own portentiousness - characteristics which in a man without genius would be merely and comically common-place. "My writings may be genteel," wrote Pushkin to a lady-friend, "but my heart is completely vulgar." The dazzling play of that vulgarly transfigured and personalized everything he wrote.

Self-acceptance and self-experience are more important to genius than self-knowledge. Pushkin's awareness of Mozart, subtly expressed in that little dramatic gem *Mozart and Salieri* (blown up into crude travesty in Peter Shaffer's play *Amadeus*) shows experience of the self converted instantly into art before it becomes self-knowledge. Such knowledge, like aesthetic delight, is left to the audience. Genius is able to exploit itself in whatever form that self happens to take - good, bad or merely banal - most usually a mixture of each; but when a worthless or odious self happens to predominate (Celine, Montherlant, William Burroughs) it is the defects themselves which skill must concentrate and carry to the limit and beyond. What distinguished such robust writers from the "nasties" of today is precisely their reliance on the truth of their personalities. Contemporary artificers of fantasy technicians of the pornographic day-dream, do not possess one, or at least do not reveal one. They are professionals who do not know how to put themselves whole into what they write. They lack the deep instinct of coincidence.

And it is this which was also lacking in our two greatest nineteenth-century

poets, Tennyson and Browning, who resembled each other more than they contrasted. In both there was total disjunction between their literary powers and their personal selves. On occasion Browning implicitly claims kinship with Shakespeare: who did not "unlock his heart" in the Sonnets or anywhere else, and would have been "the less Shakespeare" if he had. But this misses the point entirely, as Henry James must have realized. For James there was an unbridgeable gap between the Browning of the poems and the Browning of the dinner-table. James, like Shakespeare himself, lived in and through what he wrote; Browning lived outside it. In invoking the Shakespeare of the Sonnets he mistook anonymity for non-presence: Shakespeare is present in his sonnets, James in his novels, as neither Browning nor Tennyson are in their poems.

This strikes one very much in reading Norman Page's delightful collection of memoirs and recollections. In meeting genius people are usually surprised and disappointed. "Can this really be the man who? . . ." etc. etc. Everyone who met Tennyson, and most people did, was enthralled by the fact that this so obviously was the great man who had written the poems. The paradox is instructive. Besides, Tennyson was so overwhelmingly present physically. Those immensely hands with their blunt fingers, the huge palm soft as velvet. With most writers intercourse is in the head, one communicates on the page; but with Tennyson by pressing the flesh. The composer Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, who knew Tennyson in later life, is especially eloquent about this:

what was most remarkable about him was his hand. Massive and large, with long broad fingers square to the tips, and a softness of the palm which was always a surprise. It felt like a cushion of soft velvet, which fitted itself to every cranny of the hand it pressed. It always seemed to me the outward and visible sign of his noble nature.

Stanford also remarks on the raven-black hair "without a streak of white in it" that Tennyson kept to the end of his life. Can that really be so? Wasn't there a bottle of dye or tinting substance at hand? In earlier life after all, and to his friends' amusement, he had paid a professional lady to pull out dead hairs at ten shillings a time.

His vanity, so open and childlike, was transposed in art at the level of a social and historical fantasy. In 1867 he told the Irish poet William Allingham that the Arthur epic had been "all in my mind" and could have been done without any trouble, had it not been for Sterling's sceptical review in the *Quarterly* of the "Morte d'Arthur" pilot piece. "The king is the complete man, the knights are the passions". James Knowles was told much the same thing. This dismissive explanation suggests at a deep level a much less conscious image of himself as Arthur, presiding at the dinner-table among a goodly fellowship of noble knights. The poet as Arthur holds the secret of romance but takes no part in the adventures, knowing also the sad end of the story and the passing in the barge. Tennyson's passionate belief in and hope of immortality ("If I didn't believe in that, I'd go down immediately and jump off Richmond Bridge") found its chief image in the idea of rescue by water.

More important, perhaps, he came alive in company; it was the justification for himself and his poetry, as the fellowship was for the persona of Arthur; and again one is struck by the contrast with such a poet as Keats, whose personality is immanent and dramatic in his poetry, but who censored to exist, as he said, in a social scene. Tennyson, often called a "private among men", had the royal touch without effort, and one of the notes, in the manner of Aubrey, which Jowett left about his friend was "He ought always to have lived among gentlemen only" - gentlemen of all ranks no doubt. But genius rarely needs to live like that.

If W. F. Rensley reports correctly, Tennyson was himself aware of a contemporary "fellowship" aspect in the *Idylls*, but he did not identify with Arthur, quoting Lancelot's reply to Elaine's brother, who had called him "the great Lancelot":

In me there dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off
touch
There is the man

pointing to the king. "When I wrote that", said Tennyson, "I was thinking of myself and Wordsworth." Rensley rightly calls it a fine compliment, but elsewhere in the poem there is no doubt with whom the poet naturally identifies; and the identification takes

on a pictorial form, as so often with Tennyson - the poet seeing himself as others see him. Remarkably touching this can be, as in the lines on the dying Arthur:

Looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture
which like so much in the *Idylls* is incongruous with its subject but highly congruous with the childlike image of Tennyson-Arthur, rapt in a succession of marvellous sounds and pictures. William Allingham fondly recalls him peering at a great golden gorse-bush taller than himself: "I have the picture in my mind." The picture goes with the single line unit, and also with the pondered accuracy, which can be either immediate or arcane. H. D. Ransley reports that Tennyson had been asked "times out of mind" what he meant by the lines in *Maud*:

For her feet have touched the meadows
And left the daisies rosy

and had explained impatiently that a lady's dress brushing over the flowers reveals the red fringe of their under-petals. Very true. The birds who cried "Maud Maud Maud Maud" in the high hall garden were of course rooks, as he scornfully told a gushing girl who thought they were nightingales. But Ransley caught him on the line in *In Memoriam*: "Flits by the sea-blue bird of March." "What bird?" "A kingfisher of course." "But kingfishers don't flit." "True," admitted the bard in some discomposure, and he remained silent while Ransley propounded the ludicrous idea that he must have meant a blue-tit, which unquestionably flits. "Make it a tit then," said Tennyson smiling. "though I have told many people that it was a kingfisher."

All such anecdotes emphasize the as it were conversational aspect of his poetry, that it was something shared. The point about conversation is that it says nothing of importance but creates the communal feel, the art practised together when there is nothing to say, and it was a jocular observation of Tennyson that for all he was a fine poet he had nothing to say, and must beg themes of his friends. It is an odd form of egalitarianism only found in hierarchic societies, hero-worshippers at the round table. One could speculate that Tennyson's absolute recognition of Wordsworth's greatness arose from the fact that Wordsworth could turn the whole of nature and thought, feeling and perception, into Words-

worth the "egotistical sublime", and this was something Tennyson could not do. But paradoxically because he could not do it, because he made purely external sounds and pictures, longings and emotions, he had a more democratic following and was a more popular poet than Wordsworth could have been. Even his most elevated poetry is really a disguised poetry of occasion; the Catholic theologian Wilfred Ward noted his taste for the "Tiresias" dedication, "The Daisy", and the invitation to F. D. Maurice, which he said were what the French call "belles comme la prose".

There is a sense in fact in which all Tennyson's characteristic effects are as "beautiful as prose", as beautiful, say, as the best sentences in *Madame Bovary*. His own favourite line, referred to in several conversations, was "The mellow oazel fluted from the elm", which is not only acoustically perfect but perfectly mimetic of the sound described. Yet it has none of the mysterious inner life of great poetry, the life, for instance, that transforms the blackbirds "of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire" at the end of Edward Thomas's "Adlestrop". When Tennyson told Ransley that the public "would have been just as pleased if I had written 'the merry blackbird sang among the trees', he was quite wrong. The public may not understand the intimacies of poetry but they know a perfect thing when they hear and see it, and most Tennyson effects, particularly the later ones, are public, and taken to the public's heart for this reason.

Wilfred Ward has a delightful account of Tennyson reading "Vastness" before publishing it in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

Love for the maiden crowned with marriage,
No regret for aught that has been.
Debtless competence, comely child-
ren,
Happy household, sober and clean.
His hearers smiled very visibly at the last words, Tennyson looked up. "Why are you laughing?" he asked. "If we laughed perhaps others might laugh," was ventured. "True", he said, and closed his book. Next day he called us, and read as follows
Household happiness, gracious children,
Debtless competence, golden mean.
"Next day he called us" is the authentic

Marcel Proust

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Illuminating Caledonian virtue

Adam Mars-Jones

ALASDAIR GRAY
Unlikely Stories, Mostly
 276pp. Edinburgh: Canongate. £7.50.
 0 86241 029 0

Although he unleashed his first book, the massive novel *Lanark*, only two years ago, Alasdair Gray is not a new writer, nor exclusively a writer. The opening tale of *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* was first published in *Collins Magazine for Boys and Girls* in 1951, and Gray has worked (always in Glasgow, mainly as a portrait painter and muralist).

This new volume is gloriously decked out with imaginative touches, from the spine of the jacket, which shows dogs and women being rather too friendly, to an erratum slip which reads: "This slip has been inserted by mistake". The author's biography on the back flap has been turned into a minimalist found poem by the subtraction of its structure of all personal details: "He was . . . and educated . . . and became . . .". The front cover has been embellished with a pleasing pattern of recurring thistles and the motto: WORK AS IF YOU WERE LIVING IN THE EARLY DAYS OF A BETTER NATION. The back of the jacket purports to reproduce reviews of the book from the *Stirling Times* and the *Celtic Needlewoman*, while the front endpapers contain a series of dedications in tiny script. One near the end reads: "Smith of Glenlivet is a maker of excellent malt whisky, and a generous dispenser of it to those flaming intellectual suns who can illuminate its virtues."

Clearly Gray has drunk deep of the Caledonian virtues, and his book contrives to be both lavish and thrifty; paper is too expensive not to cover it minutely with jokes and ideas. There is something in him of his character McMenamy, who noticed that his Granny, knitting as she rocked, soaked as the knitted, comprised two sources of energy, only one of which was being tapped and turned to profit.

Gray's energy as an artist has not been left untapped by this volume; the text is larded with illustrations and devices, which owe something to Eric

Gill and something, as the Acknowledgements page points out, to the work of "Paul Klee, Michelangelo, Raphael, Piranesi, G. Glover, W. Blake, E. H. Shepherd and a Japanese artist whose name has no agreed phonetic equivalent in Roman type."

Gray has always been scrupulous to the point of parody in this matter of acknowledging his sources; *Lanark* includes an index of plagiarisms, and even proposes a typology of literary theft: "BLOCK" PLAGIARISM, where someone else's work is printed as a distinct typographical unit, IMBEDDED PLAGIARISM, where stolen words are concealed within the body of the narrative, and DIFFUSE PLAGIARISM, where scenery, characters, action or novel ideas have been stolen without the original words describing them. To save space these will be referred to hereafter as Blockplag, Implag and Displag.

Unlikely Stories, Mostly has fewer debts to acknowledge, but nevertheless gives away the credit for the last two stories, "A Likely Story in a Nonmarital Setting" and "A Likely Story in a Domestic Setting" (which contain five lines each) almost in toto.

Apart from this fleeting Blockplag, *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* relies mainly on Displag; the most impressive stories, "Five Letters from an Eastern Empire" and the pair of fables about the "Axletree" are announced as "decorative expansions of what Kafka outlined perfectly in 'The City Coat of Arms' and 'The Great Wall of China'."

This is a great deal too modest, as perhaps we are meant to suspect. "Five Letters", in particular, has a subtle perfection of formal development which raises it far above any "decorative expansion". The letters ("describing etiquette government irrigation education clogs kites rumour poetry justice massage town-planning sex and ventriloquism in an obsolete

nation") are from a tragic poet in a new capital to his parents in the old one, but the perception of the relationship between them changes a number of times, as the status of "a letter to one's parents" in the culture it describes becomes more clear. Poets are made not born, and being deprived of their parents at an early age is part of the training. Only the emperor can give a poet a worthy subject. The old capital has been destroyed, and with it the poet's parents, by order of the emperor. The poet is given his subject: he must celebrate the destruction of the old capital. The tone of the story remains under perfect control as it darkens and deepens, until an apparently reckless comedy has become a cruel parable about power and meaning.

"Five Letters from an Eastern Empire" towers above the other stories as much as Bohu the tragic poet towers over Tohu the comic poet, whose ceremonial clogs are barely ten inches thick. Some of the early stories, naturally enough, are lightweight, and "Logopandocry", Gray's pastiche of Urquhart, which takes him beyond his historical death in 1660, is self-defeatingly good; Urquhart decides to deploy, for the purposes of his diary, a style "less ornate, magnificent, and quodlibetically rollicking than is proper to my public emissions" and after a few pages the reader, unable to distinguish much past the coupled convergent apertures of his elliptical nose-thrills, is likely to be calling weakly for Hemingway.

Unlikely Stories, Mostly, in spite of its unevenness, is an impressive, playful and beautiful book; its author may be a painter before he is a writer, but this is only a disadvantage in pettifoggery matters like the spelling of "cheque" trousers or "boards" of bears. If all artists had as much heat in their back-burners as Alasdair Gray has in his, we would have a tiny Renaissance on our hands.

Spanning the old and the new age

J. C. McGaskarth

JESSIE KESSON
Glitter of Mica
 156pp. Edinburgh: Paul Harris.
 £5.95.
 0 86228 0214

Paul Harris's Scottish Fiction Reprint Library is one of the best things to have emerged from publishing in Scotland in recent years. So far the series has revived work which is in some cases merely forgotten, but in others largely unknown, by Edwin Muir, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, R. B. Cunningham Graham and Ian MacPherson. Jessie Kesson's *The White Bird Passes* was the first title when it began in 1979, and now her second novel, *Glitter of Mica*, is added to it.

Jessie Kesson is a novelist in the anti-Kailyard tradition of Grassie Gibbon, and this novel shares many of the preoccupations of *A Scots Quair*, but although her characters inhabit roughly the same territory as Grassie Gibbon's, she is in no sense a slavish disciple; her treatment of the passing of an "old Scotland" and all its attendant themes, is vibrant.

Glitter of Mica is set in the county of Argyll, in the imaginary parish of Caldwell, a place which "has moved neither poet to song nor tourist to praise". It is a parish of the "strictly putational Free Kirk", and although the church itself is now used for storing grain, rather than for worship, its presence is still a reality in Caldwell, echoing stubbornly in place names such as the Free Kirk Wood. The truly dominating presence in the lives of the modern parabolians, however, is Ambrogian House, a mental hospital.

The action (what there is of it) concerns Hugh Riddell and his daughter Helen, who succumbs to the "loveless" and therefore "treacherous" desire of Charlie Anson, perhaps the parish's most singular representative of spiritless New Man. Helen pays for her lack of judgment with more than just her maidenhood, and the book closes

in a kind of gloomy celebration of the persistence and determination of those closest to her. These events are enacted against a complex pattern designed to reveal the workings of the human heart in conflict with memory, the passing of time, death, the irreversibility of a certain way of life and a means for interpreting that life.

Hugh Riddell's own life has spanned both the old and the new age. The long recollection with which the book opens — entailing the day-to-day activity of his family, their working methods, songs, habits, customs — is projected from a world of espresso bars, commercial travellers, nervous breakdowns, and women whose men appear to care little for what they are doing or whom they are doing it with. This last category, incidentally, includes not only Hugh's wife, Ida, but also his slutish mistress,

who, as William Donaldson remarks rather charmingly in his useful introduction, is one of the author's many alter-egos. "Knowing your place", to Hugh, can also mean security and the comfort of permanence.

A no less important manifestation of the changes occurring in the community is the people's use of language. "Take Charlie Anson now," — entailing the day-to-day activity of his family, their working methods, songs, habits, customs — is projected from a world of espresso bars, commercial travellers, nervous breakdowns, and women whose men appear to care little for what they are doing or whom they are doing it with. This last category, incidentally, includes not only Hugh's wife, Ida, but also his slutish mistress,

Elucidating the dirt

James Hunter

LEWIS GRASSIE GIBBON
The Speak of the Mearns
 112pp. The Ramsay Head Press, 36 North Castle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3BW. £8.50. 0 902859 75 7

To be the "speak" of North-east Scotland's rural communities is to have attracted the gossip that follows failure to conform to restricted notions of acceptable behaviour. To write novels set in a place and then that kind of notoriety, especially if these novels deal in the sort of truths their characters and their local critics might have labelled "dirt", Lewis Grassie Gibbon's *Sunset Song* is such a novel. *The Speak of the Mearns*, barely started at Gibbon's death in 1935 and now published for the first time, would have been another.

Born in 1901 and brought up on a small croft in the Howe of the Mearns, that narrow swathe of fertile farmland

between the Cairngorm foothills and the North Sea, James Leslie Mitchell or Lewis Grassie Gibbon created in *Sunset Song* a novel which came at least as close as any other to elucidating the peculiar complexities of modern Scotland, an ancient nation bereft of a state, its people confronting a world in which the necessary prelude to social and economic advancement has been to cut themselves off from their own culture, their own history, even their own language.

Gibbon knew that process well; just how well is revealed by the experience of Chris Guthrie, the heroine of *Sunset Song*, making her own hard choices in the Mearns of the 1920s when, within the wider context of a Scotland at odds with itself, the crofters who had first cultivated this land were being displaced by "muckle farmers" and the more intensive farming represented by the "agri-businessmen" of the modern "agri-businessman". Gibbon's precise portrayal of the place from whence he came was one of the strengths of *Sunset Song*, making that novel truer to its setting than its successors in the *Scotts Quair* trilogy, one of which is set in a small

society which produced him.

Glitter of Mica is a dense, novel, poetic and complex, and very Scottish. Where it falters is in the treatment of plot — which depends too often on old-fashioned devices such as suspenseful chapter endings, out of place in a novel whose technique is otherwise so modernist — and a disconcerting suggestion of cosiness (less evident here than in *The White Bird Passes*) is a characterization.

William Donaldson claims the *Glitter of Mica* "stands in the highest traditions of European fiction". That is probably going too far. But it is enough, anyway, to say that a Scottish novel is back in print. Finally, one complaint about the publisher's advertisement for this series: "Back to back carries a full bibliography"; it isn't. I have yet to see one.

FICTION

The allness of the everything

Zachary Leader

RUSSELL HOBAN
Pilgermann
 256pp. Cape. £7.95.
 0 234 03096 X

Pilgermann is in part a historical novel set at the time of the First Crusade, during the years 1096-8, but stopping short of the actual fall of Jerusalem in 1099. It is also, as its title suggests, an allegory. Its eponymous hero and narrator is a figure of the Jew, as well as a pilgrim — a "pilgermann" in the general sense of sojourner or wanderer, and also in the specifically religious sense of a man on a long journey to a sacred place. Pilgermann was born in 1071, the year of the defeat of the Byzantine Empire at the Battle of Manzikert (all dates in the novel are symbolic, often suggesting the sameness and continuity of history, its unending cycle of renewal and decay). Pilgermann lives in Germany, and works "as a tailor or a surgeon or something of the sort" for a tax collector, "an official of some kind, something of authority, a man of exactness". This man is also a type of the anti-semitic, or more awkwardly (and this is not a singular awkwardness) "such a man as that cannot live without a Jew to be other than."

Since the novel is an allegory, and a complicated one, the details of its plot are worth recounting. One night — and not just any night, but the Eve of the Ninth of Av or Tisha b'Av, the High Holy Day on which Jews mourn not only the destruction of the First and Second Temples, but other disasters as well — Pilgermann climbs a ladder up to the tax collector's beautiful wife and makes love to her. The wife's name is Sophia: Wisdom. As the narrator puts it: "There's allegory for you, the vision of naked Wisdom and the Jew lusting after her." The consequences of this coupling are disastrous — and thus recall the date. On his way home from the tax collector's house in Keinjundstrasse, a mob of Christian peasants "following a sow who wears a scarlet cross" attack and castrate Pilgermann, feeding the sow his genitals. The castration, Pilgermann later tells us, is a symbolic reminder of the mortality that castrates everyone.

At this point the cuckolded tax collector appears, saves Pilgermann's life, and before riding off at the head of the mob (which he seems to have summoned) asks him to "Pray for me"

— or it might have been "Kick me". Pilgermann can't tell. This confusion has metaphysical or mystical implications that are quickly taken up in an ensuing moment of revelation: Pilgermann the Jew calls on God, and sees Christ; a vision which occasions several pages on the dual moral nature not only of divinity but of all creation — a line of paradoxical speculation familiar to readers of *Riddley Walker*. It also contributes to Pilgermann's decision to follow his Bath Kol (or voice of God) and join the newly contrite tax collector on Pope Urban II's Crusade to Jerusalem.

Pilgermann never gets as far as Jerusalem, stopping for the last half of the novel in Antioch, at the siege of which he dies. His adventures along the way involve further allegorical encounters, some recalling Bunyan, others borrowed from Bosch, including animated vignettes from the "Haywagon" and "Temptation of St Anthony" triptychs (later there's a

seven page meditation on the stone Christ-story of Naumburg Cathedral, as well as briefer discussions of Vermeer and Gislebertus). Among the characters Pilgermann encounters on his journey are the tax collector again — though by now he's been decapitated and maggots flow from his neck; the man who killed him, a relic-hunter named Udo, who hopes to pass the collector's head off as Pilate's; Udo's wife (another Sophia), with whom the enunciated Pilgermann has sex of a kind; a bear whose owner thinks is God, and shoots full of arrows when it threatens to desert him; Death, in skeleton form, who copulates with a variety of men and children (note the conflation of mortality and procreation); and the unformed image of Pilgermann's own death, later to reappear at the end of the novel as a death fully formed or born — another symbolic paradox.

Each of these encounters is the occasion of much philosophizing, as is the journey itself: the treadmill on which we walk day into night and night into day, eden into gehinnon into eden, Jesus into Judas into Jesus.

The journey ends in Antioch, "that city quick with life, with sound and motion and colour. . . . What in one form or another comes between the pilgrim and Jerusalem." Here Pilgermann is set to work designing a tile pattern for a wealthy silk merchant named Bembel Rudzuk. Rudzuk is a devout Muslim, and as prolix a mystic as Pilgermann. His hope is that Pilgermann's pattern — reproduced several times in the novel, as well as on the cover — will reveal something of the nature of the universe. This it does, in the form of a by now familiar series of mystical paradoxes about movement in stillness, unity in multiplicity, inward and outward, renewal and decay. Its names are "Hidden Lion" (the lion is also an important symbol in Hoban's first novel for adults) and "Willing Virgin" (because "the next time you look there's something different about it" — which is also meant to be true of the novel). "The lion is hidden in the willing virgin"; that is, among other things, virgin and lion are ultimately the same, like victim and victimizer, torch and flame, Christ Pandamator and Christ Ali-Subducer.

With the siege of Antioch the novel's historical dimension comes to the fore, and at last Hoban offers the reader an element of drama or narrative tension. Though the relentless allegorizing continues, the concluding pages have a powerful apocalyptic urgency. A new character is introduced: Bohemond, the victorious Frankish leader, though he too is quickly barked about with

symbolic associations (principally those of Elijah, making Antioch the fall "the Messiah and Jerusalem both"). Other historical figures who appear or are mentioned include Firouz, the treacherous keeper of the city's Western Tower (he "opens the door" for Elijah/Bohemond, as in the Seder); Yaghi-Sijan, the city's Governor; and Raymond of St Gilles, Count of Toulouse. Pilgermann's own fate is intertwined with these historical figures, and his death comes, in a shower of symbols, at the hands of Bohemond. Just before his death, though, Pilgermann is granted a dream vision of the sack of Jerusalem in the following year. In this vision appear the dead and violated body of the first Sophia (she too had come on pilgrimage), and the still living son of their single coupling. The enunciated Pilgermann learns at the moment of his death that life goes on.

All this is related by Pilgermann from the present, through what for convenience one might call his spirit. "What I am now", Pilgermann tells us, "is waves and particles. . . . Particles", we later learn, as in "the allness of the everything of which each of us is a particle"; "waves" as in radio waves or vibrations, so that Pilgermann speaks of being "tuned to the gehinnon frequency where I vibrate to the memories of all who have done evil". Later, in full mystical flow, Pilgermann speaks of himself as a "poor bare tuned fork, humming with the foreverness of the Word that is always Now. Unbearing the Unbearable, intolerating the Intolerable, being not enough for the Too-Muchness. In *Who's Who*, Russell Hoban lists his recitations as short wave listening, and stones; short wave, presumably, for its "cosmic" as well as quotidian resonance, as in passages like these; stones because they so literally incarnate the paradox of inert matter and ceaseless atomic activity (all those whirling particles). Stones, moreover, are prominent symbols in Hoban's fiction, especially here and in *Riddley Walker*.

In *Riddley Walker*, however, Hoban's mystical tendencies were anchored by a justly admired invented language. The language gave body and solidity to the culture and history of the people it depicted; it was a way of ballasting and testing the author's metaphysics. *Pilgermann* has no such weight or measure. Its interest lies almost exclusively in the fanatically complex correspondences through which "Truth" emerges. Its language, the voice Hoban has found for Pilgermann, is at best unobtrusive, a not always easy mélange of Biblical and contemporary rhythms and diction. Its story is merely a vehicle for the symbols (but then, as Pilgermann puts it: "I can't tell this as a story, because it isn't a story; a story is what remains when you leave out most of the action"). Pilgermann himself, like the novel's other characters, is abstract and unengaging, despite his jaunty manner ("Pilgermann here", the novel opens), and the almost inevitable sympathy extended to a first-person narrator. His anxieties and uncertainties are viewed *ab extra*, as parts or pieces of a larger pattern.


It is the pattern that counts. In the Acknowledgements page (this is a fiction with forty or so footnotes and a concluding remark on sources) Hoban explains *Pilgermann*'s origins: "*Riddley Walker* left me in a place where there was further action pending, and this further action was waiting for the element that would precipitate it into the time and place of its own story." That time and place were chosen, I believe, not out of any feeling for an actual historical setting, but because they allowed Hoban to quarry Jewish, Christian, and Islamic cultures (one thinks of the novel's three epigraphs, one from the Old Testament, one from the New, and one from the Quran); and the structure of allusive parallels and symmetries that results is impressive. But it also drains energy and interest from other aspects of the novel. Though artful and committed — the work of a true believer — *Pilgermann* is also bloodless and disembodied, for all its talk of "the shock of Thing-in-itself, the enormity of Now."

With the siege of Antioch the novel's historical dimension comes to the fore, and at last Hoban offers the reader an element of drama or narrative tension. Though the relentless allegorizing continues, the concluding pages have a powerful apocalyptic urgency. A new character is introduced: Bohemond, the victorious Frankish leader, though he too is quickly barked about with

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Published by The British Council

Tarts and graft

Nicholas Rankin

JORGE IBARGÜENGOTIA
The Dead Girls
 Translated by Asa Zatz
 156pp. Chatto and Windus. £7.95
 (paperback, £3.50).
 0 7011 2656 6

A Mexican police chief paces the back yard of a raided brothel. He notices that his feet sink into the ground at a certain spot; one metro down, a shovelling policeman comes across "what was left of one of Blanca's hands".

The hidden deaths and secret lives of Blanca and a half-dozen other prostitutes are uncovered in Jorge Ibarregui's mordant novel (his seventh, but his first in English translation), a witty and deadpan exposé of Mexican mores.

"Some of the events are real, all the characters are imaginary," *The Dead Girls* is cautioned from fragments (seventeen chapters, some eighty sections) like a police dossier shuffled into an investigative reporter's copy file, with all the artlessness of the most accomplished craftsmanship.

Ibarregui's talent is for irony, his first novel, *Los delirios de agosto* (*August Lightning*, 1964) satirized military incompetence — and the Mexican Revolution — through the

unconscious revelations of a general's self-serving memoirs. His short stories (*La ley de Herodes*, 1967) are drolly understated, and *The Dead Girls* is all the more effective for treating its grotesqueries in a cool and lucid tone. His books are slim smilers with a dagger of seriousness under the cloak.

The setting is small-town Mexico, 1958-63. "Tuxpana Falls is noted for its guava orchards. Every house is said to have one, but all their doors are shut." "Conception, which consists of only forty-two square blocks, is small. One cannot walk more than four blocks in any direction without coming to garbage dumps." The characters, who connect in the web of three brothels run by the Baladro sisters, Arcángela and Serafina, are revealed rather than described. They are victims of circumstance and contradiction. Simón Corona has lived with Serafina, but never knows whether to expect a slap or a kiss. In a hotel mirror, "her reflection looked different from her face."

A new paramour is Captain Bedoya, whose Army duties rarely impede life's serious business: graft. Before he arrests the *macho* little hoodlum Humberto for drug-dealing, he visits Humberto's mother, madam Arcángela, at the brothel. "At first she took him for a health department inspector looking for a health department file, with all the artlessness of the most accomplished craftsmanship."

Arcángela can recommend the Captain as "trustworthy".

"The prostitution business is simple" says Arcángela. "All you have to do to be successful at it is to keep strict discipline." The Captain punishes by getting the girls to beat each other. (At his trial he points out how humanitarian he was to take the wooden spoon away when teeth got broken.) "A girl will say yes, because it is forbidden for her to say no." The systematic brutality and exploitation are revealed in Blanca's story: she is procured at fourteen, rented for tokens, paralysed by a botched abortion, and killed by an ignorant folk-cure.

Jorge Ibarregui began his career as a playwright. He nods discreetly to Jean Genet in setting crucial action on the balcony of a brothel. At the drunken opening of the Casino del Danzón (It is Independence Day, 1961), the state Governor's secretary waves the flag from above and shouts "Long Live Mexico." All three girls in the opening "show" later die under that balcony.

The whorehouse may be a metaphor for the corrupt state, but *The Dead Girls* is not crudely explicit; its effects are skilfully gauged. The tragedy is reconstructed, so many times that the author can distract or disturb at will. He is masterly, but his narration is modest and tentative. What is certain, however, is that this is an unusually good book.

Moulding the details

Raymond Carr

SYBIL and DAVID ECCLES

By Safe Hand: Letters 1939-42
432pp. Bodley Head. £16.
0 370 30482 9

It is a mystery why people reveal their private lives in public except for money. Money cannot be David Eccles' motive in publishing the correspondence between himself and Lady Eccles from 1939 to 1942. It must be his desire to pay tribute to the memory of a much-loved wife (whose letters stand in their own right as movingly written accounts of the minutiae of daily life in England during the Second World War) and to carve out his own niche in history.

To support his view that his own actions helped to determine the course of history, Lord Eccles elaborates a theory which is the working philosophy of most politicians who have thought about their métier. There is, he argues, "a swing, a rhythm, a pattern in history... The problem is to judge how far you can go without offending the main pattern and yet mould the details to your own liking." As a young, handsome man, eloquent on paper and in speech, Eccles considers himself to have been an expert moulder. The moulding process in negotiation he likens to sexual seduction. Success comes from seizing the moment, an enlightened opportunism constantly threatened by unimaginative Whitehall bureaucrats with "their lack of faith in everything human and divine". They are, his wife writes, "like flies shut up in a luxurious bottle". Etonians are no good at the game. The Etonian mind does not embrace the "idealistic" the pathetic and illogical side of the human spirit. The "cool, lucid yet ardent" mind is the property of a certain fellow Wykehamists. Roger Makins (Winchester and Christ Church) has it - he is a steady supporter of Eccles in the Foreign Office; Hugh Dalton (Eton and King's College) singularly lacks it since, sitting in Whitehall, he does not see the rationale of the imaginative policies that Eccles is pursuing abroad.

Lord Eccles illustrates his capacity to "mould the details" in letters written to his wife while *en poste* in Lisbon, Madrid and Washington. As a director of a Spanish railway company he had been recruited early in 1939 by the Ministry of Economic Warfare to handle the Iberian Peninsula. Over Spain he differed sharply from his

masters in London: Dalton, then Minister of Economic Warfare, inherited all the prejudices of the left against Franco. The blockade which Britain could enforce must be used to punish Nationalist Spain for its pro-Axis sympathies; any supplies allowed into a starving country would only end up in Germany. To Eccles, however, the blockade must be used as a flexible instrument to keep Spain out of the war - an aim which he rightly saw as of paramount military importance - by buying Spanish neutrality by providing the supplies without which the Spanish economy would collapse. To allow Spain to starve would be to play into the hands of the Germans, very much in evidence in Madrid society and ready to make the most of Britain as the historic enemy of Spain.

What part did Eccles' flexible policy, and the issue of neutrals that allowed Spain to import these needed supplies, have in keeping Spain out of the war? This is a difficult question. British-enforced starvation would have undoubtedly increased German leverage in Madrid and left Franco with no incentive to avoid an open breach with the Allies. The danger point was immediately after the fall of France, with German troops at the Pyrenees. If the Republic had won the Civil War an exhausted country could not have kept Germany from invading a "corrupt" democracy; but Franco was an enthusiastically convinced that the Germans and the New Order were on the brink of total victory in a short war. Invasion would have had to be by consent and Hitler did not press Spain to join his war in the summer of 1940. When he did, at his meeting with Franco at Hendaye in October 1940, Franco still believed in an Axis triumph but the prospect of a short war was less certain. To commit his nation, spiritually and materially exhausted, Eccles amply demonstrates, he demanded the fulfilment of a great Spanish objective: the immediate promise of a large slice of French North Africa. Since Hitler was meeting Pétain next day, this he could not grant. After that the prospect of Spain declaring war on the Allies steadily diminished.

What Eccles, as the MEW representative in Spain, and Sir Samuel Hoare, as Ambassador in Madrid, did was to reinforce Franco's hesitations and instill reluctance to engage in any war that in Hoare's words "entailed heavy fighting", at Berchtesgaden, Serrano Suñer, Franco's brother-in-law and Foreign Minister, reminded Hitler to his face that to desert non-belligerence for war

would mean the end of neutrals and the immediate loss of 300,000 tons of US wheat.

Lord Eccles is, I think, unfair to both Hoare and Serrano Suñer. Hoare, according to Eccles, was subject to panic, "a miserable creature", a "pink rat" ready to throw in the towel; yet, though his apology *Ambassador on Special Mission* overstates his influence, he too, like Eccles, saw that "to treat Spain as an enemy is playing into the hands of the Germans". Eccles admired Hoare's sheer competence and he himself sometimes despaired of buying neutrality with wheat and petrol. Serrano Suñer was Hoare's *bête noire*, whom the Ambassador regarded as totally devoted to bringing Spain into the war on the side of the Axis, and to Eccles he was a "disgusting little man". Like Hoare, Serrano Suñer has written his apology. He never conceals that he believed in the Axis and that Spain should take its place in the New Order, but he also maintains that he shared Franco's conviction that nothing but the great reward of a Spanish Empire in North Africa would justify bringing Spain into the war in September 1940. The only way to avoid German pressure for an immediate declaration and to stave off a German invasion was to profess undying loyalty to Germany (hence the flood of pro-Axis propaganda in Spain that so irritated Hoare and Eccles) while putting up every conceivable excuse for delay in taking any step towards joining the Axis. While Hoare and Eccles see Serrano as the main protagonist of joining the winning side, this was not a view shared by Hitler, who saw him as a "Jesus". While Serrano Suñer could be appealingly charming, he could, like Eccles, seduce by charm; he saw no point in charming the British.

Eccles sees the success of Spanish policy pursued by Hoare and himself, backed by Makins in Whitehall, as a triumph over Labour politicians who insisted that Spain was wicked rather than weak - and being weak a subject for the "moulding" that was successful in "keeping the Germans out of the peninsula". His ambitious attempt to use the same carrot that had worked in Spain - British and American essential supplies to a besieged economy - failed to bring Weygand and French North Africa over to the Allies. He liked Pétain, whose simple political morality had been revealed to him in privileged conversations with the Marshal in Madrid, and believed that support for de Gaulle was a mistake. "Shall we try to get the French Empire back into the fighting line through Vichy or through de Gaulle?" He thought through

Vichy. He did not there succeed in "moulding the details of history" to his own liking.

The best literary portrait of a man, Cardinal Newman maintained, is to be found in his letters. Eccles must expect that his reviewers will brood on his personality, so nakedly displayed in letters to his wife not intended for publication. Both parties share a conviction that, in the long run, politics is a branch of Christian morality even if, in the short run, political success depends on being in the right place at the right time; both reflect an upper-middle-class despair at the shortcomings of a society burdened with aristocratic hangovers, at its lack of vision. No one is thinking of the shape of Europe and the world after the war, a matter which obsesses the "Iberian wizard" Dr Salazar, the austere Christian dictator of Portugal with "his

sense of the world as a whole" shown Lord Eccles again in intimate conversations.

"I shall soon be ready to pay a widening in the old hierarchy," Eccles writes in May 1940. In 1943 he became an MP and I remember his being spoken of as the next prime minister of the greasy pole. Was he an ambitious, too pushing - "Lucky for again" - or was he too civilised, a superior person? "By fit and chance an ambitious," he confesses. At times he seeks guidance in the Duke of Wellington's dispatches; at others he quotes T. E. Lawrence's cry, "This is God's freedom to mankind". Lord Eccles's letters are not only a contribution to history; they illuminate the psychology of politics.

Looking to the South

Peter Beck

VIVIAN FUCHS

Of Ice and Men: The story of the British Antarctic Survey 1943-73
384pp. Oswestry: Anthony Nelson.
£13.95
0 904614 06 9

M. J. ROSS

Ross in the Antarctic
276pp. Caddam, 9 John St, Whitby, Yorkshire. £12.50.
0 903535 27 X

SUE LIMB and PATRICK CORDINGLEY
Captain Oates: Soldier and Explorer
188pp. Batsford. £12.50.
0 7134 2693 4

"The Falklands factor" will no doubt lead to more and more books being published (or re-issued) on the British Antarctic Territory, concerned either with the political or the scientific aspects of that region, though these are really intertwined. In the most significant of the three titles under review, however, Sir Vivian Fuchs attempts to push aside "boring" political issues in order to stress the autonomy of science. In 1973, Fuchs argued that the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, having shelved sovereignty disputes, meant that "Antarctica has become a continent for science. Let us hope that the scientists are allowed to continue their studies uninterrupted by outside influences." In an appendix to *Of Ice and Men* he develops this view, focusing upon both the intrinsic merit of knowledge and the relevance of scientific research in a continent of considerable economic potential.

Fuchs's basic aim in this book is to provide "a polar odyssey", the story of the permanent British expedition which has been at work in Antarctica since 1943-44, initially as a wartime naval operation, "Operation Tabarin", subsequently as a civilian body, the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS), and currently as the British Antarctic Survey (BAS). As the Director of FIDS and BAS from 1959 to 1973, Fuchs was himself a principal actor in Britain's Antarctic story and was well qualified to write this interesting and profusely illustrated narrative.

He covers both the achievements and the failures of the best-laid of a scientific perspective means that some of the key stages in the story - for example, the origins of "Tabarin", which are obscured by the fact that the relevant public records are still closed - are glossed over. Nevertheless, Fuchs is unable to hide the fact that British scientists working in Antarctica are indeed involved in the sovereignty questions arising out of Anglo-Argentine-Chilean rivalry in this part of the globe. The scientists have been used primarily as a political instrument to record and strengthen sovereignty claims; this situation has prevailed since the 1959 treaty and in spite of

POLITICS

JOHN MINNION and PHILIP BOLSOVER (Editors)

The CND Story

158pp. Allison and Busby. £5.95.
043644354

ROBERT SCHEER

With Enough Shovels: Reagan, Bush and Nuclear War
286pp. Secker and Warburg. £8.95.
043644354

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was launched in February 1958, and began to create a national debate where there had been none before. The political establishment found itself under pressure from an unexpected direction, and for a while it seemed as if the character of British defence policy could be radically altered by a movement of mass protest. In the event, the establishment had more staying power than CND, which soon found itself pushed into the periphery of politics.

Twenty-five years after its founding, CND is again riding high and the same questions are being asked: Is it investing too much hope in the Labour Party? What is the role of civil disobedience? Should it shout or mumble about its opposition to NATO? How much should it get involved in related campaigns? How much is it dependent on the current state of international tension and vulnerable to the first revival of East-West détente?

As 1983 is generally considered to be a critical year - with both a general election, in which nuclear policy will be a major issue, and the arrival of the first cruise missiles expected - these questions are being asked with some urgency. The urgency is underlined by nagging doubts as to whether the movement can sustain its current effort much beyond 1983. Nigel Young observes in *The CND Story* that "there is a cyclical quality to all social movements, especially those heavily dependent on the young. There is a limit to the number of years that individuals will devote to a single cause, successful or unsuccessful; it will become institutionalised or they will turn to other things, jobs, families, homes and other issues."

The soldier's role

Geoffrey Best

VOLKER R. BERGHAM

Militarism: The History of an International Debate 1861-1979
132pp. Berg Publishers Limited, 24, Binswood Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5SQ. £8.95.
0 907582 01 X

"I defend myself. You are aggressive. He is a militarist." One of the surprises awaiting readers of V. R. Bergham's modest but muscular book is the demonstration that most of us may be called militarist nowadays, by virtue of belonging to societies which social scientists can hardly call anything else. For over a hundred years they have been driven to use this word and concept "as a way of trying to come to terms with a problem which arises in larger and more complex communities, i.e. the problem of the role and position of the soldier within them."

Analyses made up to the time of the First World War fell, broadly, into three categories: "realistic", non-Marxist, believed that the military power in the State and the military dimension of society were here to stay, and didn't much mind it; more optimistic non-Marxists believed that military presence marked the beginning of an immature, immature order and that with maturity it would pass peacefully away; and Marxist-Leninists believed it would pass away but not without the violent overthrow of the capitalist-imperialist political-economic orders it militarily represented.

What happened in the world after

It is this sense that, twenty-five years on, the movement of which CND is now only one part is moving to its most critical test that gives *The CND Story* much of its interest. The book consists of a number of short reminiscences of CND's past and in-house debates on how it should conduct itself in the future. The book is not really for the uncommitted. The justice of the cause is assumed. Nevertheless the book is not without interest for the non-member, for it does provide real insight into the thinking behind the campaign. There is very little else available on what it was up to in the lean years of the 1960s and 70s.

However, it does not give the whole story. One looks hard for a discussion of the role of the Communist Party. There are chapters on the relationship of CND with the Labour Party, the Nationalist Parties, the SDP/Liberal Alliance, but not with the poor Communists who at least deserve some credit for keeping the campaign going during its most depressed period. Another issue that arrived too late for serious attention is the wisdom of allowing the campaign to let its fortunes get so tied to the antics of the ladies of Greenham Common.

The anti-nuclear movement has benefited up to now, however, from the activities of the Reagan administration, as is made clear in *The CND Story* from references to "warmongering speeches" and "first strike" plots. Because of this, Robert Scheer's book, *With Enough Shovels*, will probably be used as extra ammunition persuading people that the connection with the United States is a cause of real danger. Scheer offers a disturbing tale of manic nuclear war-fighters and zealot anti-communists at the White House and the Pentagon. His technique is simple. He allows his victims to talk into his tape-recorder and damn themselves with foolish utterances. His prime victim is one T. K. Jones, Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces, whose prime quote, referring to the possibilities of digging deep trenches for do-it-yourself civil defence, provides the title for the book. "If there are enough shovels to go round," explained Mr. Jones, "everybody's going to make it."

In providing a context for the long

Lawrence Freedman

quotations from his interviews, Scheer correctly points to the importance of the opposition to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in propelling some hawkish personalities and ideas to the fore. In fact, the US nuclear debate of the 1970s was every bit as passionate as the European debate of the 1980s, although more confined to the élite (a bit like the British debate on the Common Market).

Groups such as the Committee on the Present Danger move from the success in preventing the ratification of SALT, helped by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, on to working to defeat President Carter. The Reagan administration provided them with a home and they set about asking for astonishing sums of money to "rebuild" US defences, exploring all manner of strange strategic options, imposing impossible conditions on arms control and adopting an unremittingly hostile stance towards the Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, all this went down badly with America's allies and became extremely unpopular in the United States itself.

Scheer conveys the flavour of the hawks' rhetoric and reasoning. His book will no doubt become a prime source of quotes designed to trouble sleep and stimulate recruitment to CND. Here we have authentic Reagan commending Lawrence Bellmont to the House of Representatives. Eugene Rostow, an unreconstructed cold warrior and founder-member of the Committee on the Present Danger with Paul Nitze, was sacked at the start of 1983, complaining bitterly that his efforts on behalf of arms control had been undercut by the Pentagon and in particular by Perle. I heard Rostow talk not long before his eviction from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and marvelled at the complete disjunction between his hard-line rhetoric and the reasonably sensible proposals with which he concluded. One explanation was that his job was uninteresting in the absence of arms control and so he had little choice but to promote it, and was encouraged in this by his surprisingly liberal and professional staff. In a similar way, Nitze as head of the US delegation to the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) talks found himself exploring with his Soviet opposite number compromise agreements of a sort that he would

The basic message, as stated on page one, is that "our leaders during the time of Ronald Reagan have come to plan for waging and winning a nuclear war with the Soviet Union, and... are obsessed with a strategy of confrontation including nuclear brinkmanship - which aims to force the Soviets to shrink their empire and fundamentally alter their society." The method is to pile outrageous quote

upon outrageous quote to support this overall impression. The result is rather unsatisfactory. The book is much more a collection of source materials than a fully-developed argument. Of 279 pages up to the index, less than half are made up of the actual narrative. There are eighty pages of transcripts of the most choice interviews (including a number with figures from the liberal establishment, who are used to highlight the reckless extremism of the hawks) and another eighty pages of detailed notes, including long extracts from newspaper stories.

Scheer tells us little of the actual fate of his cast of hawks and their dangerous notions over the past two years. Apart from Reagan himself, whose control over his own presidency seems somewhat tenuous, the only member of the cast to have exorcised the malign influence anticipated by Scheer is Richard Perle, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy and popularly known in Washington as "The Prince of Darkness". Perle has been responsible for pushing concepts of "protracted nuclear war", a negative approach to arms control and the economic sanctions on the USSR.

Two points can be made about Perle's experience. The first is that it has brought him into conflict with other members of Scheer's cast who are supposed to be part of the same conspiracy. Eugene Rostow, an unreconstructed cold warrior and founder-member of the Committee on the Present Danger with Paul Nitze, was sacked at the start of 1983, complaining bitterly that his efforts on behalf of arms control had been undercut by the Pentagon and in particular by Perle. I heard Rostow talk not long before his eviction from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and marvelled at the complete disjunction between his hard-line rhetoric and the reasonably sensible proposals with which he concluded. One explanation was that his job was uninteresting in the absence of arms control and so he had little choice but to promote it, and was encouraged in this by his surprisingly liberal and professional staff. In a similar way, Nitze as head of the US delegation to the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) talks found himself exploring with his Soviet opposite number compromise agreements of a sort that he would

have denounced if out of government.

Meanwhile, Richard Burt is now Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs and is playing a key role in starting to get arms control back on track. Burt was interviewed by Scheer and is quoted, out of context to make him appear a dogmatic opponent of any negotiations. Burt's confirmation was opposed by Senate right-wingers because they recognised that, admittedly in relative terms, Burt is capable of exercising a moderate influence on US policy.

So Scheer's first mistake is to fail to recognize the diversity of views within the Reagan administration and the institutional and political pressures that can effect remarkable changes in attitudes on taking office. It is not that Rostow, Nitze and Burt are closet doves. Far from it. But there are elements of pragmatism there which distinguish them from the crude ideologues.

Scheer's second mistake is to fail to ask about the problems that the hawks might face in putting their ideas into practice. Despite initial successes, Perle's style has been cramped by the continuing failure of the Pentagon's leadership to control the US defence budget and the growing Congressional pressure for cuts, the force of the search for an economical way to protect the new M-X ICBM from surprise attacks, the climb-down over the Siberian pipe-line sanctions and the public clamour in Europe and now in the United States for a less alarming defence and foreign policy.

Scheer's pessimism may be justified. Certainly the Reagan Administration's policy shifts do not yet constitute a complete U-turn and supporters of CND will hardly be convinced that the US government can yet be declared "safe". But Scheer's account does not even prepare us for the changes that have taken place, for it is not rooted in an analysis of the actual dynamics of policy-making and lacks a feel for the complexities, rivalries and ironies of Washington life. It is a curiosity of politics that hawks can get away with policies for which doves would be condemned. President Nixon began his 1972 election campaign against important arms control agreements in Moscow. I would not be wholly surprised if President Reagan began his 1984 campaign in the same manner.

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MARTIN DOUGHTY

Merchant Shipping and War: A Study in Defence Planning in Twentieth-Century Britain
218pp. Royal Historical Society.
£15.75 (£9.91 to members of the Society) from Swift Printers, Sales Ltd, 17 Albion Place, London, EC4M 5RE.
0 901050 83 0

The title of this book calls to mind familiar images of brave voyages: of convoys huddled together against wolf-packs of attacking submarines, and of the wartime triumphs and sacrifices of the Merchant Navy. That was the drama on which so much public concern and attention was focused in both World Wars. But what Martin Doughty does, in this well-produced monograph, is to bring into the spotlight the framework into which the sailing and loading of the ships had to fit. He explains how the events of the First World War clearly demonstrated that technological advances in the preceding period of peace had so changed the shape of war itself, and the structure of the shipping industry and its associated services, that peacetime methods of commercial organization had become totally inadequate for the maintenance of an adequate supply of

appropriate goods in wartime. It became necessary for the government to take over control of every aspect of the problem of imports: the ships, the ports, the communication networks around the ports and the commodities themselves. It was not merely a question of getting the ships safely across the seas: which ports could they be turned round, and how soon could their cargoes be distributed? Where would they go to pick up their next load, and who would pay, if the ship, or its cargo, was lost?

The experience, and the questions, were to be repeated, after no more than twenty years, in the Second World War. And in the interval, serious and prolonged attempts were made to ensure that problems comparable to those experienced in 1914-18 should not recur. But in the event, none of them did, and the nub of Dr Doughty's concern is to show how and why it happened. His explanation, broadly stated in his preface, is that the plans produced in the interwar years represented, in some crucial respects, sets of compromises between the Whitehall desire to adopt efficient solutions involving a virtual takeover by the state of the control of imports and their transport, and the more general, and frequently implicit, view that it was not only impractical but undesirable to impose such close restraints on the free-market system. Such controls might preclude the

voluntary cooperation of the commercial interests involved, whose participation was essential to the efficient working of any system. He shows how, sometimes, the potential congestion in the ports and the inefficient use of shipping was almost as high as actual losses by enemy action; how no realistic estimate of shipping or port-handling capacity were able to be made; and how the uncertain nature of any future conflict made even informed guesswork more difficult. What would be the effects of air-raids? Which ports would be open? How much cargo would the railways and the much more extensive road transport facilities be able to deal with? The knowledge was lacking and the statistical expertise halting.

By its nature the book deals with a succession of specific aspects of the subject, some of which, like marine insurance, have rituals and languages of their own, and a multiplicity of committees. Doughty steers confidently through these confused waters and is robust in his arguments and his conclusions. He thinks there was, overall, irresolution in the face of the experiences in 1914-18 which pointed up so clearly the sorts of measures that would be necessary. It is difficult to disagree with him; but it still seems impressive that such extensive planning took place at all. It still goes on, then Doughty's book might have more than passing historical interest.

Libido ad libitum

John Ryle

P. G. WALSH (Editor)
 Andrew Capellanus on Love
 329pp. Duckworth. £28
 (paperback, £12.50).
 0 7156 1436 3

CELIA HADDON

The Limits of Sex
 202pp. Michael Joseph. £7.95.
 0 7181 2079 5

STEPHEN HEATH

The Sexual Fix
 191pp. Macmillan. £12.95
 (paperback, £4.95).
 0 333 32750 0

AVODAH K. OFFIT

Night Thoughts: Reflections of a Sex
 Therapist
 256pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
 £6.95
 0 297 78043 3

BRENDA MADDOX

The Marrying Kind: Homosexuality
 and Marriage
 208pp. Granada £7.95.
 0 246 11189 5

In an interview in the current issue of *Salmagundi* (Fall 1982 - Winter 1983), a special number devoted to homosexuality, Michel Foucault draws an analogy between the new patterns of sexual practice in contemporary urban culture and the elaboration of rules for love in the courts of medieval France. (The most notable distinction, in his view, is that the energy and imagination that were formerly channelled into courtship are today devoted to intensifying not verbal play but the act of sex itself.) This analogy could be taken to suggest that sexual liberation is as phantasmagorical as courtly love, that the sexually liberated being is as rare - even fictitious - as a creature as the adulterous troubadour. All the same, in medieval scholarship courtly love was not intended or considered as instruction books but as stories or games that maintained an ironic distance from the everyday. In literary studies it is just this ambiguity in the relation of texts to life that keeps controversy alive. In history, as P. G. Walsh makes clear in the introduction to his exemplary edition of Andreas's *De Amore*, courtly love can now most credibly be seen as a literary device, but one which issued a serious challenge to the prevailing mores of sex and marriage as imposed by feudal law and Christian precept.

The myth of sexual liberation is as powerful and intractable a notion as that of courtly love, one that generates both strong moral partisanship and a vast corpus of stories that have become embodied in the *ars amatoria* of our time - the Kinsey report and its successors, the works of Gay Talese, Nancy Friday, Shere Hite and a dozen other chroniclers. The difference is that we are living this myth and, unlike courtly love, it appears to be prevailing.

Irony is not a strong feature of the taste of sexual liberation; both the story-telling and the moralizing come straight from the heart or from the loins. But there is a new variety of literature non-scholarly sex book which questions the authenticity of such accounts, if not their sincerity, and suggests that the new freedom of expression in sexual matters, freedom both to express desire and to act on it, has, paradoxically, straitjacketed our imaginations, sacrificing the inventiveness and subtlety of courtship on a procrustean bed of lust. The poverty of the descriptive language of sex, and the elaborate difficulty we have in writing or thinking about it, it seems to me that are other than banal, are actually compounded by the removal of prohibitions. Such writing seeks

responses to the sexual revolution that avoid both outright condemnation and unconditional endorsement; nevertheless it cannot help but draw on the language and values of one or the other of these positions.

The first, a view extant at the time of the troubadours, is Bible-based, Pauline or Augustinian: sex has a single function, reproduction; heterosexual acts without the possibility of conception are therefore perversions, along with onanism and homosexuality. Even the onanism method may not escape strictures: according to the latest version of this position, Vatican roulette is as much anathema as artificial forms of contraception. There shall be no recreation without procreation. In this tradition, sexual desire tends to be seen as an affliction, a wound, a kind of fever.

According to the opposite view, sex is as safe as milk. No one gets hurt: all can take their chance at bliss. The sex doctors tell us that sexual pleasure is everyone's birthright - medical technology has made it free from complications and the maximum amount of gratification can be extracted from it by reading the right books. In fact it is our duty to ourselves and our partners to do so. The favoured metaphor is appetitive: *The Joy of Sex* succeeds *The Joy of Cooking* and is followed by *Gourmet Sex*; Alex Comfort becomes the Brillat-Savarin of the bedroom.

There is a third view that distances itself from the subject, arguing that sex is a phantom conjured up by a medical investigation of bodily desire which has mistakenly created a single entity out of a multiplicity of sensations. In this view sexual feelings are too labile to be grouped under a single reigning metaphor, whether it is food or fire or fever. As Foucault puts it, the various sexualities - those, for instance, that manifest themselves at different ages beginning in infancy, those which become fixated on particular tastes or categories of object or person (it is fetishism or, arguably, in sexual "inversion"), those which invest relationships like that of doctor and patient or haunt spaces such as schools or prisons - are each generated in different ways by mysterious interactions of power and pleasure, regulated by society but internalized by individuals.

Foucault's view, in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, might be said to represent the contemporary equivalent of that of the clerks of courtly love - a critical but playful distance from the oppressive orthodoxies, both those of repression and those of liberation. In *The Limits of Sex*, Celia Haddon also attempts to find a middle way. The liberalist view, she argues, that of the sex doctors, has encouraged a preoccupation with pleasure that engenders more anxiety and remorse than it relieves. The promise of the sexual Utopians has been betrayed. Not milk and honey but poison is all too often the outcome of their recipe. Ms Haddon's reading of the works of Havelock Ellis, Kinsey and Masters and Johnson reveals a hidden agenda in which the phantom appetite is elevated to a pleasure principle. A form of knowledge that had as its original aim the revelation of diversity in human relations has established a mistaken but powerfully normative notion that erotomania is the natural condition of man.

Her case against the privileged position of sex in contemporary Western culture (perhaps one should be on the safe side and say bourgeois culture, or the culture of people who read books about sex) is reinforced by the complications that have arisen in the medical technology that was supposed to liberate women, in particular, from the reproductive aspects of sexual activity. The iatrogenic disorders resulting from the use of oral contraceptives and the current epidemic of venereal disease have together cast a pall over the picture of sex as a healthy and harmless idyll. (It can be argued that the true beneficiaries of the sexual revolution have been the viruses and bacteria that exploit the new venoms created by widespread promiscuity and unusual sexual practices.)

Not that the sex doctors set out to invent new practices, only to trace the existing paths of pleasure and lineaments of desire, thereby releasing intercourse into discourse. But it can be argued that by this investigation they have established one new pleasure - the pleasure of talking about sex - and that this pleasure, the pleasure of representation, magnified and spread, as rapidly as microbes, by twentieth-century communications technology, has created the present babble of sex, the sexspeak that both lulls and confuses us.

The revulsion against the Panglossian philosophy of the sex doctors can lead back to metaphors characteristic of a repressive era - sex as disease, a kind of epileptic fit that seizes us every so often. Haddon is not a reactionary to this extent; in fact she is in favour of most of the freedoms associated with the cultural desublimation that is the subject of her book. But she thinks things have gone too far, that our expectations are caught up in misleading images of sex as good clean fun, a sport that has covertly become highly competitive. *The Limits of Sex* is a sensible tract for the times, addressed to those caught in the fray, but it does not perhaps get to the heart of the problem.

The heart of the problem is this: the notion of sexual liberation depends on an understanding of power as a system of laws and taboos, external constraints on an unadulterated source of pleasure which "liberation" will release. But powers and pleasures are related in a much more complex and intractable way: they are both immanent in and constitutive of desire.

We are implicated in society's power play; we cannot escape from it under the bedclothes.

Some of these complications are reflected in *The Sexual Fix*. The double metaphor of Stephen Heath's title reveals a pull to both the biblical and Foucauldian views of the matter. Sex is an addiction, something it's hard to give up; it is also a trap, something to be got out of. Western capitalism is to blame, says Dr Heath. It has produced a commodity that does not really exist and perpetuated it by cunning imagery and ways of talking, turning sex into a kind of fetishism that distracts from real relations between individuals.

Heath, who teaches English at Cambridge, is, like Haddon, concerned with the individual who finds himself caught up in this state of affairs; he is concerned also to reach an explanation of it in terms of the historical evolution of society. He writes, he says, against "the terrorism of 'sexuality'". *The Sexual Fix* strives to offer simultaneously an account of current theories of human biology, a history of ideas in the field of sexology, from the nineteenth century on, and a number of exegeses of passages from sex manuals, novels and autobiographies. The idiom swoops from the demotic through the literary-critical to the francophone-psychanalytic. Heath writes as though clarity were a trap - he is going on under thick blankets and like an anxious lover he uses too great a variety of techniques.

Both he and Haddon tend to assume the existence of a sexual monoculture where everyone is equally vulnerable to the persuasion of the reigning

Blue Glass

The underworld of children becomes the overworld when Janey or Sharon shuts the attic door on a sunny afternoon and tiptoes in sandals that softly waffle-print the dusty floor

to the cluttered bed below the skylight, managing not to sneeze as she lifts newspapers, boxes, gap-stringed tennis-racquets and a hamster's cage to the floor, and shifts

the tasseled cover to make a clean surface and a pillow to be tidy under her head before she straightens, mouths the dark sentence, and lays herself out like a mummy on the bed.

Her wrists are crossed. The pads of her fingertips trace the cold glass emblem where it lies like a chain of hallionates melting in the dips above her collarbones. She needs no eyes

to see it: the blue bead necklace, of sapphire or lapis, or of other words she knows which might mean bluesiness: smethyst, azure, chalcedony can hardly say how it glows.

She stole it. She tells herself that she found it. It's hers now. It owns her. She slithers among its globular teeth, skidding on blue pellets. Ice-beads flare and blossom on her tongue,

turn into flowers, populate the spaces around and below her. The attic has become her bluebell wood. Among their tappy grass the light-fringed gas-flames of bluebells hum.

They lift her body like a cloud of petals. High now, floating, this is what she sees: granular bark six inches from her eyeballs; the wood of rafters is the wood of trees,

Her breathing moistens the branches' undersides; the sunlight in an interrupted shaft warms her legs and lulls her as she rides on air, a slender and impossible raft

of bones and flesh; and whether it is knowledge or a limpid innocence on which she feeds for power, hasn't mattered. She turns the necklace kindly in her fingers, and soothes the beads.

Fleur Adcock

Crowning ceremony

David Nokes

ROBERT LATHAM and WILLIAM MATTHEWS (Editors)

The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A new and complete transcription
 Volume 10, Companion. 626pp, plus tables and maps.
 0 7135 1993 2.
 Volume 11, Index. 344pp.
 0 7135 1994 0
 Bell and Hyman. £19.50 each.

"February 16 1668... all the morning making a catalogue of my books, which did find me work, but with great pleasure, my chamber and my books being now set in very good order." Pepys was a man whose deep instinct for order in his library, as in his life, would have been suitably gratified by the meticulous scholarship of Robert Latham and his assistants in the newly completed edition of the *Diary*. Three hundred and fifty years from the day of Pepys's birth, the appearance of the *Index* and *Companion* volumes of his *Diary* are the crowning achievement of a work of monumental editorial diligence. Latham's skill in tackling the extraordinary variety of Pepys's interests and enthusiasms has been to provide order without constraints, and clarity without suppression. Pepys himself used a certain judicious censorship to maintain his reputation for regularity. Only a week before completing the catalogue of his library he burned his copy of the salacious book *L'Ecole des Filles* "that it might not be among my books to my shame".

Similarly, in September 1666, when facing the possibility of an awkward Parliamentary investigation of the accounts of the Navy Office, Pepys "new moulded" those accounts and erased his own name from one ill-judged contract. The *Diary* itself is written in a cryptic shorthand, while Pepys further concealed his sexual indiscretions by describing them in a curious macaronic tongue, a confection of Latin, French and Spanish. Yet, paradoxically, the essential quality of the *Diary* is the remarkable candour with which he admits to all such sleights and subterfuges. The glory of the present edition is that it imposes no outside censorship upon Pepys's words. For the first time we have the man as he revealed himself to himself.

The choicer, profounder and politer method of using books, Swift reminds us, is "to get a thorough insight into the Index, by which the whole book is governed and turned, like fishes by the tail". I am happy to report that this Index passes the Swift test effortlessly. The primary requirements of any index - that it should be accurate and comprehensive - are meticulously observed; but Latham has gone much further than that. He has provided a volume whose synoptic summaries and gargantuan lists offer a flavour of the whole work, an evocation of the man Pepys and a positive incentive to read on. Under the heading *ANIMALS* we encounter an alphabetical menagerie from baboons to wolves that would have done credit to Noah. The heading *CLERK (OF THE ACTS)*, subsection *Perquisites*, introduces an Aladdin's cave of bribes and gifts: silver flagons and candlesticks; gowns and gloves full of coins; sides of beef and barrels of oysters; a diamond ring and a warming pan, among the many other inducements offered to Pepys, and usually accepted, in return for contracts. The entry for *FOOD* takes up a full seven columns, and with a television series of the *Diary* in preparation, Pepys's reputation stands higher than ever before. In August 1662 he remarked, "I find myself a very rising man." He never wrote a truer word.

The Bell and Hyman edition of Pepys's *Diary* has been reviewed in the *TL* as the individual volumes have appeared, beginning with a leading article on November 20, 1970 (Volumes 1 to 3), and continuing on December 24, 1971 (Volumes 4 and 5), December 8, 1972 (Volumes 6 and 7), August 2, 1974 (Volume 8) and July 16, 1976 (Volume 9). This information also appears in the *TL*'s own index for the years 1940 to 1980, which is to be published next month by Research Publications Ltd, Reading RG1 8HE, in three volumes (2994pp, £300, 0 903713 94 2).

DAWELL, wife of William: her good looks, 4/222; P plans to seduce, 4/222, 266; visits, 4/233-4; finds her virtuous, 4/234; and modest, 5/163; asks P for place for husband, 5/65-6, 163; P kisses, 5/287; she grows affectionate, 5/301-2; he caresses, 5/313; she visits him, 5/316, 339; her resistance collapses in alehouse, 5/322; amorous encounters with: at her house, 5/350-1; 6/40, 162, 189, 201, 253, 294; 7/166, 284; 8/39, 95; 9/221...

Judged by the standard set by this excellent index, the *Companion* volume is slightly disappointing. It is not clear whether it is intended merely as a *bonne bouche* to the whole series, or as an encyclopedia of the Restoration. The *Diary* touches the life of its period at so many points and offers such an embarrassment of riches that the scope for annotation is practically infinite. Thus the range of persons and topics included in the *Companion* cannot help but seem somewhat arbitrary. Latham explains that his guiding principle has been "the importance of the person in the context of the diary. A ship's carpenter, if the evidence about him allows it, will be awarded more space than an ambassador." This principle is less clear in practice however. To take one random example, why is Louis XIV's mistress, Louise de la Vallière, included when Sir Henry Vane, whose execution in June 1662 had a considerable impact on Pepys, is not?

The *Companion* includes a number of special articles by eminent scholars on topics and institutions mentioned in the *Diary*. In the main these are judicious, concise and informative, none more so than the excellent essays on music and the theatre supplied by Richard Luckett, who has succeeded Robert Latham as Pepys Librarian. However, there is at least one significant omission. In recent years the historical study of sexuality has become increasingly popular, following the work of historians as diverse as Lawrence Stone and Michel Foucault. No one offers more useful information on sexual behaviour in the Restoration period than Pepys, and yet there is no article on Sex in the *Companion*. Instead this area of Pepys's life is smuggled in rather awkwardly under the heading "Health (A Psychoanalyst's View)". Similarly, in the *Index* SEX is given less than a quarter of a column, which contrasts sharply with the seven columns for FOOD. No doubt the editors were anxious to scotch the vulgar misconception of Pepys as merely an incorrigible lecher. But the choice of the coy euphemism "Health" seems oddly inappropriate to his lively libido. Most of his sexual encounters were described in his private polyglot language, and my other regret is that in compiling the otherwise excellent glossary which concludes the *Companion* Latham should not have translated these hybrid terms.

In his biography of Pepys, Richard Ollard reminds us that Pepys's contemporaries would have been dumfounded at his posthumous reputation as a diarist. "It is as though we should be told that Sir Winston Churchill will be remembered for a series of philosophical arguments unearthed among the Chartwell papers a century after his death." It has taken three centuries for Pepys's achievement as the greatest English diarist to be recognized in full. Now, with the completion of this unexpurgated edition of the *Diary*, together with the publication of Latham's recent one-volume selection *The Illustrated Pepys*, and with a television series of the *Diary* in preparation, Pepys's reputation stands higher than ever before. In August 1662 he remarked, "I find myself a very rising man." He never wrote a truer word.

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WHSMITH

Dancing from the soul

Gabriele Annan

KEITH MONEY

Anna Pavlova: Her Life and Art
425pp. Collins. £30.
0 20 216366 7

Anna Pavlova's life was a *tour de force* and so is this biography of her. It has more than 400 quarto pages printed very handsomely—in double columns, and "hundreds and hundreds of photographs". The research took six years: the wonder is it did not take longer. Keith Money seems to have discovered, from the Yearbooks of the Imperial Russian Theatres, from reviews, contracts and correspondence, and from diaries and scrap-books kept by members of her company, exactly what Pavlova was doing at every moment of her life, whether it was dancing *Nikita* in *La Bayadère* at the Maryinsky on the evening of September 4, 1905, or travelling from Bournemouth to Leicester on October 10, 1927—an inconvenient journey on a Sunday, no doubt, but nothing compared to her one-night-stand tours of North and South America: there her schedule was "a cat's cradle all over the map". Just to look at it was to recoil with fatigue.

The sight of Money's Mississippi of words might induce the same feeling, especially as it is not even divided into chapters and has an index so full of omissions that it might as well not have one at all. But to recoil would be a mistake: one bobs along most agreeably on Money's easy, unassuming prose; he has an engaging irony and some really funny jokes. Besides, he writes with so much expertise, insight and sympathy that one comes to care very much for Pavlova. This amounts almost to a rehabilitation; it has not been fashionable for many years either to like or to admire her, because she took ballet up a cultural cul-de-sac while Diaghilev led it into the future.

She was born in St Petersburg in 1881 and lived through the First World War and the Russian Revolution. For most of her career she never stopped passing girlish round about the earth, but her life was really quite uneventful: it was just dancing – though often under horrendously unsuitable conditions. She was demonstratively fond of animals and children, and very, very generous, especially to members of her company. But she had no private life and two of the most important events in it remain shrouded in mystery. Her mother was a washerwoman: who was her presumably illegitimate father? Money thinks he was a rich Jewish banker, but his reasons are conjectural. Pavlova looked like "a well-bred Jewish girl": she asked one of her English dancers whether she had Jewish antecedents; and she got on well with Sol Hurok.

The second question is whether she ever really married Victor Dandré. She said she did in 1914, but when she died he was not accepted as her legal heir. He was a member of the Duma and became her admirer and protector at about the time she graduated from the Maryinsky Ballet School to the Company. She soon became a prima ballerina, and an international star when, like other members of the Imperial Opera and Ballet companies, she used the long summer vacations to appear in Western Europe. For one season she was with Diaghilev in Paris. By 1911 she was spending most of her time touring England and the United

States. She was a zealot, a Billy Graham of the dance, inspired not by "lofty idealism, but missionary vigor". She had an unprecedented talent for publicity and endless patience with the tedium of promoting it by interviews, appearances, posing for photographers, and endorsements for cold cream, corsets and even grand pianos. You could say that like her contemporaries the early Hollywood stars she was a pioneer of the whole tiresome industry. The publicity she sought was not so much for herself as for the art of classical ballet which was still called toe-dancing by many of the Western reviewers who raved about her.

ballet of the cultivated public, Karasvina and Nijinsky its idols (though Nijinsky also had a wider, legendary appeal like Pavlova's). Today we think of ballet mainly in terms of companies: the Royal Ballet, the New York City Ballet, the Nederlands Danseteater, the Kirov. In Western Europe at the beginning of this century there were no prestige companies (except in Denmark), though some opera houses like Paris had their "rats" to do a little cavorting in opera and display "splendour and feminine gender". Great dancers – of whom there were almost none – appeared as the occasional soufflé on

a pot-pourri of "numbers", sometimes perhaps a one-act ballet, never aiming at anything like a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, as Diaghilev did. Her dancers were mediocre and many were English, partly because England was her most regular catchment area and partly because English girls tended to be staid and complained less than Russians or Poles. They sprang names like Butsova (Hilda Butt) and Crombova (Madge Abercrombie), and although Pavlova kept exhorting them to let themselves go and *express*, they were inclined to lack stage personality. Pavlova's choreography was often feeble or else lifted from the repertoires of St Petersburg, Moscow or Warsaw; her sets and costumes were kitsch; the music she used – apart from the inevitable Weber, Chopin and Tchaikovsky – was mediocre. The obvious reason for all this mediocrity was economic. "Maximum effect in minimum time" was what Pavlova's chosen public preferred (not overall minimum time of course; a long programme with as many items as possible); but "brief intense vignettes" – "The Dying Swan" was the most famous – also suited Pavlova's "feble approach to performing".

Still, Money keeps insisting that she was not as phillistine and reactionary as she is made out. She did try to put on three-act ballets: they never did well, not even *Giselle*; she used designs by Bakst and choreography by Fokine; after the war she even commissioned the young Balanchine. It was Dandré, Money thinks, who hated anything modern and often dissuaded her from breaking out of her mould.

This will be the definitive biography of Pavlova for many years to come; but anyone who spends £30 on it will be doing it mainly for the amazing collection of photographs which Money has managed to assemble – another six years' worth of research, one might think. In some ways none of them, of course, can compare with action photographs of modern dancers, and there are naturally very few performance shots. Almost everything had to be posed, even the travelling snaps from the albums of Pavlova's company where she, smiling manically at children, dogs, swans, pythons and other dignitaries, was "The Dying Swan". Pavlova's most popular later work was "Bacchante", a music by Glazunov. A still from it, adorned by Glazunov's covers and about her and her first partner, Mikhail Mordkin, prancing out from under a spangled dust-sheet with Harp-like expressions of crazed sexual glees. Many of the photographs appear slightly ludicrous; but many more capture Pavlova's beauty, grace, dignity and unearthly quality. Her dazzling elegance is most sumptuously displayed in two unexpected series of her modelling the fashions of 1908–11 and 1920–27.

Pavlova has always been criticized for presenting ballet in bits and pieces,



Mikhail Mordkin, in fact as well as in the dance in love with Pavlova, photographed with her in the *Bacchante*, to the "Autumn" music from Glazunov's *The Seasons*, in a performance at New York in March 1910. On their leaving New York, Pavlova denied the rumour that they intended to marry: "We are too busy to think of marriage." Reproduced from the book under review.

States with a scratch but ever-growing company, and appearing only for very short seasons in her native land. She acquired a house in Hampstead which turned out to be useful when Dandré became involved in a financial scandal and had to flee from Russia. It was their base for the rest of her life. The marriage or non-marriage was soon platonic, but they continued to "adore" (Pavlova's word) one another, and he became the exceedingly capable manager of her company. She wanted to tour and he arranged it: "He was like a truck layer running ahead of a train that never slackened its pace". In a sense she threw herself under that train when, in 1931, fifty years old, exhausted, suffering from a painful chronic knee injury and pleurisy, she died in a hotel room in The Hague.

Pavlova is and was a legend. Women who had never seen her would bring their children to the stage door and ask her to touch them. Her impact was due to various qualities combined in her.

Finally, she was a very great artist; even her critics never found fault with her own performance. The fiendishly hard to please Ernest Newman summed up what everyone said from Berlin to Pernambuco: she was "a dancing soul where the others were only dancing bodies". Her ethereal lightness was something that had not been seen since the days of Taglioni: even in Russia virtuosity and charm had distinguished the leading ballerinas rather than this dreamy, drifting quality. Emil Ludwig spotted something else as well: "Pavlova achieves a spiritual effect which has, however, as erotic basis, she both excites and elevates. This degree of neutrality can at times drive the spectator mad." This view is unique among the many quoted by Money, but Ludwig may well have put his Central European finger on an important truth.

What Pavlova never was was chic or avant-garde. Diaghilev's ballet was the

otherwise robust music-hall menus. Diaghilev's was the first ensemble ever seen; and it never ceased to be either esoteric or broke. Pavlova, on the other hand, was the darling of the groundlings, and, according to Money, this was how she wanted it: she danced in music-halls and toured because that was how she kept her company financed, certainly; but "provincial audiences were not concerned with the expertise of the raggle-taggle group that accompanied Pavlova... they wanted Pavlova and she wanted them". This was in 1911 before she had a permanent group, before the "hired and fired gypsy band" had become quite a well trained "supportive family". But it was "her voracious appetite for performing... the adrenalin charge that came from her instantaneous success with each new audience" that kept the show on the road.

Playing at politics

Brian Fothergill

MADELEINE BINGHAM

Princess Lieven: Russian Intrigue
261pp. Hamish Hamilton. £15.
0 241 10269 3

The story of Dorothea von Benckendorff, Countess and later Princess Lieven, is one that shows how much power and influence women could wield behind the scenes in the world of international politics and court intrigue long before the notion of women's liberation had become an issue of any importance. From just before the fall of Napoleon to the outbreak of the Crimean War Princess Lieven was ideally placed to observe, and occasionally to intervene effectively in, the conduct of affairs: first as the wife of the man who for twenty-one years after 1812 was Russian Ambassador in London, and afterwards, a voluntary exile in Paris, as the confidante and lover of the historian and politician, François Guizot, who after various ministerial posts (including, like Dorothea's husband, a brief period as ambassador

in London) became chief minister to Louis-Philippe until his fall in 1848. The Princess achieved such power as she was able to exercise by the use of charm and flattery, and by being a sympathetic listener with the art of coaxing secrets and indiscretions from monarchs and ministers who fell under the spell of "her ingratiating personality... and who included Castlereagh, Wellington, George IV and Canning. The fact that her character was very much stronger than her husband's, and that she had the confidence of Tsar Alexander I, were both of material assistance in promoting her ascendancy in political circles in London, but it was her liaison with Metternich, following their meeting at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 that first gave her a taste for political power. She continued from then on to indulge her new-found interest without much consistency and with no motive beyond personal ambition, and a vague desire to promote the interests of the Russian court. She was devoid of any positive political principles; rarely if ever read books; and had received little education in anything beyond the social graces. The Earl Duke of Bedford, commenting on her

ignorance of all historical events before the beginning of her own political career, recorded in a remark that has escaped Madeleine Bingham that though the Princess had lived for over twenty years in England she had never heard of Cromwell until Guizot assured her that such a person had existed. To her politics was a game, one engaged in for personal triumph or to snub one's enemies. As Alan Palmer remarked of the Princess in his recent life of Metternich, "at the age of twelve she had played blind man's buff with Tsar Paul, Marshal Suvorov and the last King of Poland; and it was a game which she never really abandoned when she emerged into the world of politics". Eventually she was to lose the game by her own lack of foresight, for by intriguing successfully to have Lord Palmerston made Foreign Secretary she was instrumental in bringing about her husband's recall from London by Tsar Nicholas I when he refused to accept Palmerston's nomination of Stratford Canning to the British embassy at St Petersburg.

Madeleine Bingham has written a book that hovers uneasily in the no-man's-land between biography and historical romance. She does justice to the drama in Dorothea Lieven's life,

Balancing out the baroque

Jonathan Keates

CHRISTOPHER HOGWOOD AND RICHARD LUCKETT (Editors)

Music in Eighteenth-Century England: Essays in memory of Charles Cudworth
265pp. Cambridge University Press.
£25. 0 521 235251

PHILIP H. HIGHFILL JR., KALMAN A. BURNIM and EDWARD A. LANGHAM

A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers and other Stage Personnel in London 1660–1800
Volume 7: Habgood to Houbert
436pp. 0 8093 0918 1
Volume 8: Hough to Keyse.
448pp. 0 8093 0919 X
Southern Illinois University Press.
\$40 each.

Pedantry alone defines the limits of professionalism. Thus Charles Cudworth, in whose memory these essays, collected by Christopher Hogwood and Richard Luckett, are published, was an amateur musician simply because he was curator of the Cambridge Music Faculty library as opposed to being the holder of an academic teaching post, the editor of a specialist journal or the

A taste in texts

Richard Langham Smith

MARGARET G. COBB (Editor)

The Poetic Debussy: A Collection of His Song Texts and Selected Letters
318pp. Boston: Northeastern University Press. \$21.95.
0 930 350 28 6

Left to speak for themselves, the peripheral documents of a composer's life evoke the man and his music with varying degrees of success. Naturally enough composers with a medium of literary flair fare best. With Schubert, for example, O. E. Deutsch's "documentary biography" is bound to remain unparalleled by any "professional" biography precisely because it dispenses with the biographical skills of interpretation and speculation. In the case of Debussy the only work of this kind remains untranslated from the Polish, and we have no complete collection of letters nor the assembled texts of the various literary works he considered setting at one time or another. When such collections do appear there can be little doubt that our picture of Debussy will appear in sharper focus, free of the many elaborations and accretions of the fanciful biographers of earlier in the century.

Lovers of French music will remember Margaret Cobb as the *animatrice* of the regrettably short-lived Debussy centre at St Germain-en-Laye, the composer's birthplace. Here she worked tirelessly at assembling dispersed Debussy materials, and the present book is a

presiding genius of a *gesamtsaubele*. The implied stigma is ironically underlined by the fact that he was an autodidact, whom illness prevented from completing his early education and who used his afternoons off at Cambridge bookshops to may keyboard scores of music which interested him. Add to this the sort of unblinkered comprehensive enthusiasm which never allowed him to be confined within any but the broadest of scholarly fields, and the portrait of the so-called amateur is complete.

Such labellings are of course absurd. Nurtured on tireless assiduity and an unfused precision, Cudworth's scholarship was exemplary, furnishing not simply the *ipse dixit* for many an encyclopedia and dictionary entry, but opening up fresh areas of study at a time when Baroque and Rococo composers were still extensively viewed as quaint, note-spinning precursors and contemporaries of Handel and Bach, who would have written a B Minor Mass or a *Messiah* only somehow could not quite manage it, belonging thus to Tovey's Interesting Historical Figures brigade or offering a *point d'appui* for authors of Polignac and Sprague Coolidge commissions. It was a notable part of his achievement to suggest that our arrogance, rather than their insufficiency, was at fault here, and his avuncular unassuming manner, as the Third Programme's *Music Magazine* and *Record Review* was invariably calculated to persuade us

not only that Boyce, J. C. Bach and Albini were worth taking seriously but that a properly balanced musical prospect was inconceivable without them.

His most potent influence was in helping to re-shape the perspective of English music which had hitherto been narrowed to the point of including almost nothing in the two centuries dividing Purcell from Sullivan. The present volume, which, as its editors emphasize, is "neither a Festschrift nor a commemorative tribute in the conventional sense", pursues lines of enquiry stemming ultimately from Cudworth's patient conviction that composers such as John Stanley, Maurice Greene and William Croft merited a good deal more than special pleading from devoted PhD students. When he wrote of John Christopher Smith, Handel's musical assistant, that "he was an excellent composer in his own right" he meant what he said.

Each of the two editors sustains this pioneering principle in essays devoted to Baroque England's awareness of its musical past. Christopher Hogwood substantially transcribes Thomas Tudway's historical abstracts from the prefaces to his manuscript collections of English church music begun in 1715 for the Harleian library, offering us an absorbing glimpse both into contemporary aesthetics and into rudimentary moments of analysis. In Tudway's breathless account of the Purcell Te

A surprise publication of the songs of the so-called Vansier songbook has already satisfied our curiosity about this highly important collection, claimed in the present book as unpublished. Madame Vansier, the dedicatee of no less than twenty-five of Debussy's early songs, figures prominently in the introduction. For the first time, the compiler has included details of these dedications from the twenty-one-year-old composer to the older *femme fatale* and they reveal a striking intimacy which moves conjecture about their liaison into the realm of fact. This chronological assemblage enables us to see the considerable importance of Debussy's infatuation (consummated or not) with his *cantatrice*, spurring him on to abundant composition and gaining invaluable experience in the setting of poetry. Without her, one concludes, he might have developed more slowly and along different lines.

The collection of letters has rather less to offer and all but the best-read in Debussy matters will feel the lack of an interpretative essay to give direction to the various literary references. A sense of illumination exudes from many passages in the letters, but the *petits coins* of the composer's mind need to be further explored for the reader who may sense that Debussy borrowed the phrase from Baudelaire of *laforque* without quite knowing why. Nevertheless, it is useful to see the composer's quotations side by side and to read the few unpublished letters. Although the book as a whole does not give us a complete image of the poetic Debussy, it is certainly a step in the right direction.

To Ivor Gurney

Driving north, I catch the hillsides, Gurney,
Whose drops and rises – Cotswold and Malvern
In their cantilena above the plains –
Sustained your melody; your melody sustains
Them, now – Edens that lay
Either side of this interminable roadway.
You would recognise them still, but the lanes
Of lights that fill the lowlands, brim
To the Severn and glow into the heights.
You can regain the gate: the angel with the sword
Illuminates the path to let you see
That night is never to be restored
To Eden and England spangled in bright chains.

Charles Tomlinson

Deum, ending "This most beautiful, & sublime representation, I dare challenge, allye Orators, Poets, Painters &c of any Age whatsoever, to form so lively an idea, of Choirs of Angel-singing, & paying their Adorations", the zeal is truly Cudworthian; but that such admiration was already starting to founder under the weight of Augustan authority is the theme of Richard Luckett's typically elegant and well-pointed survey of Purcell's eighteenth-century reputation. Gildon's "Harry Purcell" who "seem'd to have the Genius of Greek Music; he touch'd the Soul; he made his way to the Heart... soon enough became the composer of a 'dull, tedious, antiquated suite of choruses... infamously bad', counsellor against by Acne and over whom Burney desperately hovers, seeing him both as a kind of Gothic Handelian forerunner and as infinitely more sensitive than the younger man in his handling of English text.

Purcellian echoes in Handel are explored by Franklin Zimmerman in what is fundamentally an answer to questions raised by earlier commentators like Rendall and Westrup. The whole field of Baroque borrowing is so heavily mined with coincidence that it required a heroic certainty to cross its verges. Over-enthusiastic detection will perhaps end in the bizarre reduction of Handel's entire output to pillage from Kerll, Habermann or Stradella. Zimmerman indeed takes a sideswipe in this direction at Harold S. Powers's discovery of a Bononcini underlayer for *Verse* before going on to reveal the essentially Purcellian qualities of rhythmic declamation in the fourth Chandos Anthem.

Six out of the dozen essays in the book deal with varying aspects of Handel scholarship. Terence Best provides an exhaustive checklist, based on scrupulous analysis of prints, autographs and manuscript copies, of the keyboard music; Donald Burrows is comparably painstaking on Walsh's sonata and concerto publications and

Winton Dean is justifiably impatient with the modish reluctance of producers and conductors to let the operas plead their own cause in an appropriate performing style. Most arresting of all, and indispensable to the Handelian, are Anthony Hicks on John Christopher Smith's share in additions to the 1750s oratorio performances and Ruth Smith on the intellectual context of the works themselves. The first includes the tantalizing suggestion that the last fragments of *Rodrigo* may lie buried among these final interpolations, and the second, following but mercifully not imitating the hermeneutic approach of Lang's biography, is the germ of a notable monograph (though the author might do well to look harder at *Thodora*, the most intimately cerebral of the composer's last works).

Whatever the music, Charles Cudworth never lost sight of the man behind the piece and the period defining the composer. Thus he would surely have relished the latest in the endless pleasures of Highfill, Burnim and Langham, whose volumes go on reminding one of the theatre's positively satanic elements of the incalculable. 200 pages of Kembles from Roger to Charles are offset by mournful little entries like "C. Jones played the harp at the Haymarket Theatre on 21 July 1798" or "a Mr Jennings shared benefit tickets with minor house servants at Covent Garden Theatre on 29th May 1782 and 4th June 1783". What were the hopes of Mr Hills, who sang "The Life of a Bean" at the James Street playhouse for Mrs Careless's benefit, and in what St Giles garret did Esther Haward end her days, who dressed Mrs Abington for a single Drury Lane season? The musical entries suffer inevitably from having been made before publication of the New Grove: Johann Adolf Hasse, for example, never came to London and has thus no business here at all. Otherwise the delights, including the customary samplers of documents at the back of each volume, are unfailing.



Edouard Manet, *At the Café* (1874)

Manet and Modern Paris

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THEODORE REFF

This striking exhibition catalogue displays scenes in and around Paris as portrayed by Edouard Manet, his predecessors, contemporaries and followers. The works – which include pieces by such well known artists as Vuillard, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Raubert, and Whistler and such lesser known artists as Emile Bernard, Théodore Dabbier, and Norbert Goeneutte – date from a time when the modern city, and above all Paris, was being discovered by artists as an important source of subject matter and stylistic innovation. Modern art itself was being born. The paintings, pastels, prints and photographs are grouped in nine sections that illustrate characteristic features of the Parisian scene and portray the remarkable changes that occurred in Manet's art from the early 1860s to the early 1880s.

Drawing on material from the history of art, literature and urban history, Reff analyzes the fashionable Manet and his relationship to the social and cultural milieu of Paris – the boulevard des Italiens, the neighbourhood of the gare Saint-Lazare, and the influence of Baron Haussmann and Baudelaire. Reff offers new insights into these relationships, and, in the catalogue entries, provides original analyses and readings, little-known documentation, information on sitters, and readings of major pictures in association with clusters of related works.

In combination with the forty illustrations, Reff's essay and catalogue entries provide a welcome and astute picture of Manet, his work, his interests, his city and his contemporaries.

280 pages, 130 black-and-white illustrations, 24 colour plates; April 1983, £31.95

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commentary

Death on the dole

Ronald Hayman

Kuhle Wampe
Academy Cinema

If we discount films of his plays, *Kuhle Wampe* is the only film in which the dialogue is written almost entirely by Brecht. Ernst Ottwalt is given a credit as co-writer, but in several plays of this period Brecht gives credit to collaborators. It is odd that the film made between August 1931 and February 1932, should receive its first British public screening in 1983. It is being shown in a double bill with Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre sa vie* (1963), which superficially seems the more Brechtian of the two: it is divided into titled sections; it is austere in lighting and composition; it resembles a documentary, containing a catechism about prostitution and dealing with the representative case of a girl forced into selling her body to pay her rent.

Brecht's film is less concerned to tilt against the conventions of the cinema (which were less ossified in 1931); it makes a statement which, unlike Godard's, has nothing to do with the faces or the personalities of the actors, while the narrative material is tightly determined by a desire to illustrate the social consequences of unemployment. Brecht and his director, Slatan Dudow, however, do not seem to be going out of their way to introduce scenes involving mass participation, though the background of one sequence is provided by a workers' sports festival in which 3,000 members of a proletarian sports organization participate, and in one of the songs 3,000 voices are heard on the soundtrack.

In the plays Brecht wrote in the 1930s, it was usually a woman who was converted from political passivity to angry activism - Johanna Dark in *St Joan of the Slaughterhouses*, Pelagea Vlasova in *The Mother*, Señora Carrar in *The Rifles of Señora Carrar*. In *Kuhle Wampe* the convert is a man, Fritz (Ernst Busch) the lover of Anni (Friedrich Thiele) whose brother has killed himself, unable to bear incessant humiliation in the fruitless hunt for work and in the oppressive family rows provoked by old-fashioned parents, who are unable to adapt their values to the new situation, although the father is unemployed too. Evicted for being in arrears with the rent, the family joins Fritz in *Kuhle Wampe*, which was

formerly a holiday settlement and is now inhabited mainly by the unemployed. When Anni becomes pregnant, Fritz agrees to marry her, but reluctantly. Several Brecht plays contain a wedding celebration which goes wrong, and the equivalent here is a cleverly screened sequence of an engagement party which is held in a tent, while the fiancé remains outside, sulkingly venting his resentment on crates of beer he humps about. Anni breaks off the engagement, but unemployment, community singing and latent communism combine to change Fritz's attitude.

Though the screenplay was divided into eight "acts", Brecht was not thinking in terms of theatrical dialogue. *Kuhle Wampe* is built up out of images, and many of the most telling points are made silently, as when the despondent boy takes off his wrist watch and carefully moves the potted plants before jumping out of the fourth-floor window. When Brecht uses theatrical ideas, such as choric commentary, they are well adapted to the medium, as when, after the body has been found, the camera moves from neighbour to neighbour.

It cannot be contended that *Kuhle Wampe* is intrinsically a particularly good or important film. It is too shallowly propagandistic and the interest in the central characters alternates between seeming deep and seeming perfunctory. The story is not strong enough to save the film from being unbalanced by the spectacular crowd scenes and the sequences of argument, such as a political discussion in the S-Bahn about the profiteering destruction of the Brazilian coffee harvest. A number of good points are being made visually about the ex-army bourgeois reactionary who becomes not under his stiff white collar, and about the more sympathetic proletarian characters who are travelling back from the sports festival, but the protracted argument gives the film a top-heavy ending, whereas in *Vivre sa vie* there are no *longueurs* in the lengthy philosophical argument between Nana and Brice Parain. Godard, if he is misusing the medium, is misusing it knowingly and expertly, while Brecht had no chance to acquire filmic expertise. It was absurd that Hollywood wasted his talent when he was living there from 1941 to 1947; *Kuhle Wampe* proves this, as well as forcing us to look in a new way at filmic elements in his plays.

Shakespeare wallahs

S. Schoenbaum

Shakespeare in the Commonwealth
Centre for Commonwealth Literature
and Research, Mysore

In *Shakespeare Turned East*, offered by the University Press of Mysore in 1976 as "A monument to hands and hearts across the seas", east and west met in both authorship and content. Written by Professor H. H. Anniah Gowda, Director of the Centre for Commonwealth Literature and Research at Mysore, together with Dr Henry W. Wells, Curator of the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University, it explored analogies between Shakespeare's late romances and the classic theatre of India: the Sanskrit plays of the school of Kalidasa. Wells has since died, but his collaborator continues to use the Shakespearean connection to bridge two cultures. In January in semi-tropical Mysore, with its palm trees, bullocks, coconuts, and University clientele, Professor Gowda brought together twenty-five or so of us for a seminar on "Shakespeare in the Commonwealth".

From east and far they came: from Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupathi and the Punjab University in Patiala; from Hyderabad, Dhawan, Calcutta, and Madras, even from the North-Eastern Hill University of Kohima. Professor Philip Brockbank,

the Director of the Shakespeare Institute at Birmingham, was the British delegate. It was, I understand, the most widely representative Shakespeare conference ever to be held in India.

Indian themes understandably loomed large. Professor Gowda broadened his comparative enquiries to include Shakespearean middle comedy with a talk on "Likeness and Difference between *Much Ado About Nothing* and Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*", with special reference to the estranged pair: Hero and Claudio, *Shakuntala* and Dushyanta. (Others thought that, like *Hermione* was a less distant kinwoman than Hero to *Shakuntala*.) In "Transcendental Vision: An Indian Light on Shakespeare's Last Plays", Professor T. R. Rajasekhariah of Gulbarga discussed the Indian view of "Sanyas" - wholeness or harmony - in the dramatist's last phase.

The translator's task occupied several speakers. A lively non-Madras Dr D. Arundel, offered a stimulating paper on the variety of translations and adaptations in Telugu. Mostly, he felt, these failed to measure up, and traditional attitudes towards Shakespeare, Dr V. Sachinidharan of Madurai (Kannada) University, examined in detail Tamil translations, giving special attention to local traditions - linguistic, religious, and cultural. "Good" Shakespearean scholars are not good translators.

Unshared assumptions

Peter Kemp

Omnibus: Writers on the Right
BBC1
Voices: Is Jimmy Porter Dead?
Channel 4

Omnibus recently set beside each other two writers liable to get beside themselves over the strong points of Fascist dictators. Henry Williamson, fan of the Führer, was the subject of a documentary that comprised the first half of the programme. Ezra Pound, the Duce's disciple, featured in a play that followed.

Of the two, the survey of Williamson was the more substantial. The basic facts of his life were efficiently sketched in, and the main stumbling-block to an appreciation of him - his unbridgeable belief that Hitler was "a good and misunderstood man" - was rapidly drawn out. Called in to comment on Williamson's tribute to "the great man across the Rhine, whose life symbol is a happy child", Frederic Raphael easily toppled it with just one instance from the camps: the repeated breaking of youngsters' bones to see how long it would take before they ceased to mend. Meanwhile, foregrounded in the hut where their hero used to write, Williamson aficionados paid tribute to his "compassion".

The programme tried to bridge these two positions by suggesting that Williamson - traumatized by his experiences on the Western Front - favoured Hitler purely because he saw him as a man of peace. This image of the author as pacifist dreamer, though, was then punctured somewhat by the news that he kept a pitch-fork handy to fight off invaders of his Norfolk farm. And in any case, compassion hardly seems to be envisaged in his "Affirmation" of what "men of genius" should be: "artists in detachment" who "shine upon the world as the sun which sees no shadows". A more promising approach might have been to follow the lead indicated by Ted Hughes in his address at the writer's Memorial Service. Williamson "worshiped energy", Hughes declared there - going on to make this insight link his art and politics more rivetingly than *Omnibus* managed to.

Ezra, a compressed version of Bernard Kops's play about Pound, left an even bigger gap between its right-

wing writer's politics and his conduct. In fact, it left out the latter altogether. Since the Ezra Pound Trust disavowed the play, permission to quote Pound had been refused. Unhappily, the start, it would appear, the transmission. Having lost most of Pound, it went on to lost most of Pound. At first, this was deliberately engineered. Largely over to Pound's ravings in his cage or American mental hospital, *Ezra* was a play that invested Pound with technical disruption to convey derangement. Cacophony round the studio; a head was seen at three different angles at once; conflicting sound-tracks were played simultaneously. Amid this visual gibberish, the play's plunge into silence seemed more a fancy effect. It was, supposed, as Pound mutely mouthed his dumb diatribes, yet another of the play's symbolic ploys. The appearance of the message "Temporary hearing loss" cut short such speculation. Not, alas, the play. Restored to its original form, *Ezra* relapsed into its loud but clear bulletins from Bedlam.

As if to even the political balance, some nights later, *Voices*, that the Left too has its demons. Supposedly, the programme was debate on David Edgar's claim that contemporary theatre aims to challenge its audience but "to do so" shared assumptions. Given the boundaries of his central term - Edgar, *Guns and Dolls*, feminist political theatre, plays a dissemblance are all "celebrating" discussion seemed likely to ramble. In the event, despite intelligent prodding from Lisa Tash, the debate was no starter. This largely due to the fact that two participants refused to be pried from *ideas fixes*. Secluded in a half-ideological purdah, Mollie Wendor, a feminist playwright, gave to her own premises, ignoring David Richards, proponent of proletarian theatre, regularly drew any opening towards non-partisan discussion by unloading class rage into it. Ironically, a debate about the celebration of shared assumptions splintered dismally into the affirmations of individual prejudices.

Daniel Farnson's *Henry: An Appreciation of Henry Williamson* reviewed in the TLS by Julian Savile on September 24, 1982.

More than once during the tentative deliberations anxiety was expressed over how Shakespeare - and the humanities generally - would fare in the universities amid the hardware and software bequeathed by the computer chip revolution; for inevitably, as we all recognized, a knowledge explosion carries in its wake an ignorance explosion. As regards this concern, as well as others, east met west at Mysore. On the whole people, however, troubled, didn't despair over what the future might hold, and my own worst impression, very keenly felt, is that Shakespeare is alive and well in India.

Among scholarly and critical journals to have appeared recently is the second issue (1983) of *LTP, Journal of Literature Teaching Politics* (ISSN 0278-575X) which is available from LTP, Arts Building, Sussex University, Brighton BN1 9QW, at £1.76, including postage. Contributors include: Alison Williams, Brian Street, Ulrike Hanna Muehle, David Forgacs, Alan Sinfield and Peter Stallybrass.

The second issue of the hand-drawn *Classical Antiquity* (ISSN 0278-6656) is currently available from the University of California Press, 2223 Fulton Street, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA; yearly subscription, \$20 to individuals, \$40 to institutions; \$2 postage outside the USA; checks should be payable to The Regents of the University of California. The next issue will appear in April.

commentary

Landscapes in the light of day

Clovis Whitfield

Claude Lorrain
Grand Palais, Paris

The largest retrospective ever devoted to Claude, at the Grand Palais until May 16, is also the first major exhibition of his work in Paris. Claude Gellée, called Le Lorrain, thought of more in his own time as a citizen of Rome than of France, was appreciated most, in the three centuries following his death, in England, where no country house collection was complete without an original or a copy. Although most of what has been written about Claude has not so far come from France, and this exhibition was organized in Washington to celebrate the tricentenary of the artist's death (1622), there are signs that the French public are waking up to the recognition of the greatness of his work. Curiously the presence of an outstanding group of paintings in the Grande Galerie of the Louvre has belied an indifference on the part of French collectors to this great master of landscape painting. It is only recently that his native town in Lorraine, Nancy, has acquired a work from his hand, and after the days when he and Poussin went sketching together in the Roman Campagna, Claude seemed out of step with the academic tradition, which accorded only a modest role to the landscapist. In a way, Claude could be seen as a kind of naïf painter, whose love of nature and whose individual interpretations of history subjects were not in line with the development of French painting in the eighteenth century, whereas they meant far more to the romantic sensibilities of the English traveller to Italy.

The conception of the exhibition grew from one of prints and drawings, to one including the pictures in America, and then finally to a comprehensive review of Claude's work, drawn from collections the world over. This means that the section of drawings is particularly strong, with marvellous sheets from the Royal Collection, the British Museum, the Teylers Museum in Haarlem, and from the now dispersed album formerly in the collection of the Norton Simon Museum. The catalogue, drawn up by Diane Russell, and essentially a translation of the Washington edition (480pp, New York: George Braziller, 0 8076 1055 0), makes its most important scholarly contribution in the area of the etchings, and although it is heavy on the arm, it is an excellent accompaniment to the exhibits and a sound introduction to Claude as a whole. With everything reproduced, many colour plates and a lot of comparative illustrations, the presentation of the catalogue of the Arts Council exhibition of 1969 at the Hayward Gallery. There are a few variations from the Washington showing - the National Gallery sent the "Enchanted Castle" to America only, while the Queen has lent an additional work, the marvellous "Rape of Europa" that has been cleaned since it was shown in the Arts Council exhibition.

An important element at the Grand Palais is daylight, for in Washington the show was displayed in the exhibition galleries in the new East wing, which are below ground level. It is important to have the benefit of changes of intensity of light, which are impossible when the source is wholly artificial. It would have been wonderful too, though impossible because of the lighting levels, if some of the drawings could have been set alongside the pictures, not just those that are preparatory studies, but also those which show Claude's observation of nature. It would certainly enhance the studied impression that the artist sought, often at a distance of years and on a very concentrated scale, of those effects of nature that are the real subject of his paintings. The juxtaposition of pairs of paintings, where quite disparate themes are

united by the contrasting effects like morning and evening, is very effective in the Paris exhibition. So it is surprising that one of the most beautiful pairs of pictures that survive together, the "Arch of Constantine" and "Pastoral Landscape" in the collection of the Duke of Westminster, are not to be seen together in this season of celebration.

The cleaning that has been undertaken in recent years of many of the pictures (a process that is well documented in the catalogue) has style did result in a larger scale, but he remained attached to effects of detail and atmosphere that link him to the cabinet tradition of Northern painting rather than to the design of the Italian pictorial school. There is reason to believe that Claude was moved by the sense of design to be found in the nascent Italian landscape tradition: the "Landscape with St George and the Dragon" from the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, directly echoes the composition of the painting of the same theme by Domenichino in the



"Landscape with Dance" (1663), pen, brown and grey wash, black chalk with white heightening; a drawing by Claude in his exhibition.

made it possible to look at Claude literally in a new light. Although the artist worked so intensively on some passages that certain of his effects have undoubtedly perished, others have come to be seen with the careful cleaning and restoration. Already in the eighteenth century the impression they gave had altered, and the limitations that date from the early eighteenth century painted by artists like Hendrik Van Lint often look more strident in colouring. It is excellent now to see the richness of modulation in the foliage and atmosphere of those paintings which are outstandingly well-preserved, like the "Ariadne and Bacchus on Naxos" (if that is really the subject) from the Arnot Museum at Elmira, New York. Unlike other contemporary artists in Rome Claude did not have assistants and the sympathetic cleaning of many of his paintings has revealed subtleties that have often been disguised since the eighteenth century.

The show clarifies the course of Claude's development: works like the pair of oval landscapes on copper from the Louvre which seem to have entered the Royal Collections in the time of Louis XV can be excluded as most probably pastiches, perhaps from the hand of Van Lint, who is described in an unpublished letter from Thomas Patch to Sir William Lowther in 1756 as having "always imitated Claude and has had the retouching of most of the fine ones in Rome". Patch himself did copies of the Claudes in Italy for English patrons, spending "five months" feteague copying the two in the Pamphili Palace. The English conception of ideal landscape was entirely coloured, in the eighteenth century, by this "Italian light on English walls".

It was not always the case that French collectors ignored Claude's work, and the record that he left of his paintings in the *Libre Vertales* shows, in the inscriptions giving details of the patrons for individual pictures, that Paris was by far the most frequent destination for the early works, and this must have been even more so in the first twenty years of his Roman stay before the inception of this record. In this Claude was following the natural pattern of a foreigner working in Rome, coming into contact at first mainly with the Northern community, and like them producing works that were portable for the very good reason that they had to be carried to distant markets. The increasing popularity among Roman collectors of Claude's

late 1630s onwards. The splendid finished drawing, perhaps a presentation piece, of the "Rest on the Flight into Egypt", which was lost when Roethlisberger published his catalogue of Claude's drawings and turned up in the unlikely collection of the Musée du Petit Palais, is a convincing illustration of the admiration he shared with his patrons for Albani and the Caracci. In their turn, the French artists of the eighteenth century continued, from Vernet to Valenciennes, to use the principles of landscape composition that they culled from Claude, while intellectually their patrons regarded the genre of landscape as a decorative one. The exhibition enables us to see not only the extraordinary observation of nature that Claude achieved, but also the intellectual penetration of his understanding of classical themes, which was none the less profound for being less ordered than that of the Académie Royale.

It is questionable whether the monographic approach is artistically the most illuminating for an artist as well-known and documented as Claude. In many ways the most exciting avenue to explore in Claude's work is the relationship with his contemporaries, not only his sketching expeditions with Poussin in the Roman Campagna, but also the parallel careers of Northerners like Swanevelt and the extremely fertile ground of the 1650s in Rome, which provided the springboard for so much artistic activity and which is still imperfectly understood. It is still difficult to see the relationship between artists like Salvator Rosa, Castiglione, Poussin, Claude, Gaspard Dughet, Testa, Pietro da Cortona, Andrea da Lione, to mention but a few of the artists whose personalities emerged during this period. In this context, it is splendid to see the two large upright landscapes executed by Claude for the all-important project of decoration of Philip IV's Casón del Buen Retiro in Madrid, on which so many painters collaborated in the 1650s. But it is important to emphasize that the important masterpieces are now on display at the Grand Palais are to be subjected to the risks of travel, the audience for such an exhibition be as large as possible, and certainly this anthology will enthrall its public with an immediate appreciation of Claude's career, particularly from the

Fifty years on: Montaigne

The following is an extract from an essay by J. Middleton Murry which appeared in the TLS of March 16, 1933 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the birth of Montaigne.

Montaigne is the standing confutation of all that is excessive and inhuman in Pascal. By his mere being he dissolves the menace of "le moi est toujours haïssable." Montaigne has something more to tell us than that, something wiser and therefore less distinctly formulable. It is that the self is lovable, if a man can bring himself to love it. What the self depends upon how we behave towards it. It can be lovable, because it can be loved; but it can be loved only by the not-self. In his early manhood Montaigne knew the secret of love. Self-obliteration came to him naturally in his friendship with Etienne de Beaulieu. "Si on me presse de dire pourquoi je l'aymoy, je sens que cela ne peut exprimer qu'en respondant, 'Parce que c'estoit luy; parce que c'estoit luy.' The quintessence of human love is in those words. To have felt it is to have known that life is blessed; for love is the vision of the incomparable, the nonpareil; and it is seen only in self-forgetfulness.

To have turned his power of self-forgetfulness upon himself - this was Montaigne's triumph. He looked upon the self with the eyes of the not-self. And the history of that singular achievement is written at large in his book. - Indeed, the "Essays" are the embodied process of that achievement. Montaigne knew that also better than his posterity has known. His book is one long and infinitely various act of self-discovery, self-objectification, by his own rules.

made possible only by self-forgetfulness.

Montaigne touches his greatest heights in passages... where he surveys his own activity as the writer of the "Essays." At such moments the paradox of this achievement comes into full view; where he is ostensibly most personal, there he is most impersonal, at such moments, with the later masters of self-revelation, with Rousseau of the "Confessions," with Chateaubriand of the "Mémoires d'Outre-tombe." It is not a difference of degree, but of kind. In Rousseau and Chateaubriand we are interested; we read avidly all that they have to say; nevertheless, at the end, with Pascal at our elbow sternly demanding our final judgment, we are forced to confess that "le moi est toujours haïssable." But with Montaigne it is quite different, where Rousseau and Chateaubriand blench beneath the sentence of Port Royal, Montaigne stands secure and invulnerable. He is proof against all the solids of modern analysis; he has applied a radical moral scepticism, not to others but to himself.

Montaigne, who knows what he is doing, knows also the dangers of such knowledge. He must be faithful to his own growth. He must not prune, he must not trim, above all he must not suppress what he had written. It had come from him spontaneously; therefore it had its place in the pattern. The scruple did not prevent him from making his language more vivid and nervous. That would have been a fanaticism. As artist, and as man, Montaigne knew when not to be bound by his own rules.

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Oxford University Press

to the editor

Translators and PLR

Sir, - Peter Jay (Letters, March 4) asks why there has been no outcry about translators not being eligible for PLR payments. This Association is a subsidiary group within the Society of Authors which has recommended all along that translators should be included in the PLR scheme.

One obstacle is that there are as yet no provisions for reciprocal arrangements with other countries and it has been argued that it would not be right to include, for example, a translator of a German book given that the German author would not be eligible for PLR. We have recommended that a translator should be entitled to receive a share of PLR even if the original author is ineligible, but that the share of an ineligible author should remain in the fund.

Recently, the Society and the Writers Guild made a full submission to the Minister for the Arts on changes that need to be made to the PLR scheme. Once again we have strongly recommended that translators should be eligible, and that there should be reciprocal arrangements with other countries.

JULIAN CHANCELLOR.

The Translators Association, 84 Droyton Gardens, London SW10.

Nutrition and Health

Sir, - J. N. Morris creates his own myths about the success of nutrition education (Letters, February 11). He cites professional nutritionists and professional literature to prove his point. Referring to sources with considerable status in investment in demonstrating their professional worth is rather like asking the Apostles how Christianity is coming along. Had he done his qualitative homework amongst the common folk at McDonald's, in the swimsuit department at Marks and Spencer, or at the supermarket check-out counter, he would have discovered what Mary Douglas's article (November 5, 1982) is saying. He would have found that most persons cannot describe the origin or use of benefits of a polysaturated fat, that the decrease in sugar consumption is more likely due to fears of midlife bulge than to diabetes, and that the year-long purchase of iron-fortified infant formulas by well-

fare mothers is more related to government infant food coupons than to maternal fears of weaning anemia.

Professor Morris comments, in conclusion, that today's properly nutritional food is just as comforting, just as communicative of symbolic meanings as grandma's improper, nutritionally bankrupt cuisine. If the professor finds a broiled, skinned chicken breast, green salad with lemon juice, and wine-poached pears for dessert as comforting and as redolent of social meanings as a Sunday roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, sweet butter, and chocolate layer cake for dessert - well then he's a better man, and a better myth-maker than I.

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'Edmund Ironside'

Sir, - In his article on *Edmund Ironside* (August 13, 1982) Eric Sams proposed the consideration of this anonymous play as an early work of Shakespeare. His arguments were countered by Richard Proudfoot (Letters, September 17, 1982), and the discussion continued in further letters from both parties (September 24 and October 8). Reference was made to another anonymous play, *Edward III*, and to my work on it in a thesis for the University of London which had been supervised by Mr Proudfoot. The effect of my thesis was to show that words, rare in Shakespeare's vocabulary, which occurred in *Edmund Ironside* clustered to a statistically highly significant degree in Shakespeare's earliest works, particularly the *Henry VI* plays and *Titus Andronicus*. Dr Sams drew attention to similarities between *Edmund Ironside* and *Edward III*, and the question arose whether the rare-word vocabularies of the two plays showed a corresponding relationship with Shakespeare.

It has now become possible to put the matter to the test. Louis Ule has made available computer-read texts of concordances and word counts both for *Edmund Ironside* and for *Edward III*. In my thesis ("The Problem of the Reign of King Edward III (1596): A Statistical Approach") I listed 940 words appearing in that play, which appeared either not at all in Shakespeare's plays and major poems, or from one to twelve times and not more. Mr Ule's concordance for

Edmund Ironside has enabled me to count how many of these 940 words occurred also in that play, with comparison counts for Parts 1, 2 and 3 of *King Henry VI* and *Titus Andronicus*. It was found that 481 of these words appeared in one or more of these five plays, namely:

| | Words | Appearances |
|-------------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1 <i>Henry VI</i> | 204 | 254 |
| 2 <i>Henry VI</i> | 157 | 184 |
| 3 <i>Henry VI</i> | 139 | 191 |
| <i>Titus Andronicus</i> | 125 | 152 |
| <i>Ironside</i> | 134 | 176 |

From this it appears that *Edmund Ironside*'s rare words show their highest frequencies of appearance in the *Henry VI* plays, especially 1 *Henry VI*, in *Titus Andronicus* to a lesser degree but in *Ironside* more commonly than in *Titus*. All these numbers are of roughly comparable magnitude.

We can now carry out a further test by counting the numbers of specified words with coincidental appearances in both members of any pair of these five plays. Of each word we note whether it appears both in play A and play B, or in A but not B, or in B but not A, or in neither. The numbers of coincidental appearances of words should be proportionate to the numbers in the Words column of the above table. For instance, 204 of *Edmund Ironside*'s 940 words are found in 1 *Henry VI*; 134 are found in *Ironside*. The number which one can expect to find in both 1 *Henry VI* and in *Ironside* as a chance effect will be 204 x 134/940 = 29.081. The actual number found is 44, which is half as much again, and is in statistically significant excess. Proceeding in this way we reach the figures of the following table, where the numerals 1, 2 and 3 stand for the three parts respectively of *Henry VI*, T for *Titus* and I for *Ironside*.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | T | I |
|---|--------|--------|-----|------|----|
| 1 | — | 52 | 47 | 39 | 44 |
| 2 | .00025 | — | 39 | 35 | 27 |
| 3 | .00025 | .00025 | — | 26 | 27 |
| T | .005 | .00025 | .05 | — | 26 |
| I | .0025 | .20 | .05 | .025 | — |

The observed numbers of coincidences are shown above and to the right of the table. All numbers are in excess of random expectation, some of them in very large excess. To test their statistical significance we can use a chi squared test (one tail) with Yates's correction. The probabilities of the values of chi squared are less than the decimal numbers shown below and to the left in the table.

These results indicate that the rare-word vocabulary of *Edmund Ironside*

is particularly closely related to that of 1 *Henry VI*, but also to a statistically significant degree to that of *Titus Andronicus*, and less so, but still significantly, to that of 3 *Henry VI*. They can be regarded as providing evidence which tends to support the hypothesis maintained by Dr Sams.

I have a list of the 481 words from *Edmund Ironside* used in this analysis, together with their distributions in the five plays. Correspondents who would like to have a copy of this list may obtain one by writing to me.

ELIOT SLATER.
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Susan Sontag

Sir, - One Christopher Hitchens (and one is plenty) writes in your American notes column (March 4) that an essay in *Harper's* by "one Marvin Mudick" reviewing *Susan Sontag Reader*, sexually slurs Ms Sontag by referring to her as "Susie Creamcheese". In addition, he charges a double standard in sexual innuendo: "It's hard to think offhand of a male author of similar stature who would be described in public in this way."

What is the slur, exactly? One Hitchens informs "the uninitiated" that Susie Creamcheese "is an American schoolyard vulgarity ('Creamcheese' spreads so easily)". In fact, Marvin Mudick is more widely known than this vulgar innuendo about creamcheese which, near as we can tell (after considerable research), exists only in the minds of Messrs Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Ms Sontag's publishers, who have created a ridiculous fuss over the matter. In fact, "Susie Creamcheese" is 1960s California slang for a naive and impressionable teenager (roughly equivalent to today's term, "Valley girl").

As for the idea that only women are victims of critical commentary in the form of sexual innuendo: a recent article in *The Nation*, a left-wing weekly, accused One Ronald Reagan almost as prominent a figure as Susan Sontag of "doing to the country what he can no longer do to his wife". A sexual slur against a man and an insult to all women at the same time; quite a feat. The author was One Christopher Hitchens.

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Catullus

Sir, - In reply to Freddy Hinde Jones (Letters, February 4), following the interpretation of *modio populum puellae* in *Tristitia* (the benefit of his gift-friend) according to which *puellae* is dative ("for the benefit of his girl-friend") I agree) that this is impossible: *puellae* must be genitive, and the meaning must be (to quote the new translation by G. P. Gould) "I just now caught sweetheart's pet winking".

PETER HOWELL.
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Sir, - To publish a letter (February 4) from a gentleman who admits to Latin is "poor" and "a thing of the past", and who can prefer James Michie's interpretation of Catullus 51 to that of scholars like A. E. Housman, is irresponsible and unworthy of the TLS.

Mr Michie is a gifted and witty versifier whose work I admire, but does not do to a free-translation for the sense of a text of doubtful meaning. One has access to the opinion of professional scholars on the subject.

The crux of the matter is the word *puellae* in line 5. Some editors (as Mr Michie) take it as a dative (plainly an advantage) after *tristitia* in line 4, others as a genitive with *populum*. (The dictionaries are no help, *Tristitia* is hopelessly rare: *OLD* gives this as the only example, stating that it takes dative).

Mr Hurdus-Jones should consult J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*, p. 146, n. 1, and Housman "Tristitia" (*Classical Papers*), Diggle and Goodyear, p. 175. In discussion. To my mind, Mr Adams (pp. 145-46) proves beyond reasonable doubt that the *verba crederet* implies a sexual act perpetrated as punishment. So Mr Hurdus-Jones is likely to be wrong on both counts. There is no Catullus finds his mistress (presumably Lesbia) masturbating and buggers him to boot in a lesson.

Shall we next have E. V. Rieu's translation of the *Oedipus* quoted by someone as proof of the colour of Menelaus' hair or Athena's eyes?

CHRISTOPHER STACE.
Bradfield College, Berkshire.

Upward mobility and its price

Leonard Schapiro

SHEILA FITZPATRICK
The Russian Revolution
181pp. Oxford University Press.
£9.95.
019 219162 4

It is a remarkable fact that although over sixty-five years have passed since the two Russian revolutions of 1917, no comprehensive history of them has been published in English since Chamberlain's excellent two volumes appeared in 1935. A great amount of evidence has become available since then, even to scholars deprived of access to Soviet archives (the overwhelming majority), and this has provided the material for many valuable monographs - on the fall of the monarchy, for example, or on the Bolshevik seizure of power. Soviet scholars too have produced a few studies of merit: comprehensive histories by scholars in the USSR are not numerous, and are invariably heavily coloured by the current party line and by communist indifference to facts, which render their judgments predictable and their conclusions offering their assessments of the nature and significance of a phase of history which altered the face of the world - whether for better or worse will remain a subject for heated dispute for many decades to come. In her short but elegant survey of the Revolution, Sheila Fitzpatrick claims that she has added to the "normal questions of why and how the Revolution occurred" the investigation of "why the revolutionary regime survived". Since, she argues, no regime can survive which does not satisfy some of the aspirations of the population, the answer has to be sought in the upward mobility provided by the Revolution (in which period she includes Stalin's rule up to 1939) to mainly working-class

inheritors of the positions of greater or lesser privilege which the Soviet régime offers.

National Socialist overall social policy, without hint of disapproval?

It is not, of course, the millions that matter - one unjust death is bad enough. Dr Fitzpatrick is stern with the historians who address themselves to the question whether "in some cosmic sense" the achievement of the Revolution - meaning, presumably, the "upward mobility" - was worth the sacrifices. But at any rate it is necessary if we are to understand this revolution to assess the nature of the cost, and the true reason why it was exacted. The first victims of the Bolshevik take-over were the socialists and their following in the working class. This following was low in October 1917. By 1920, as a result of the Bolshevik policy of expropriating all freedom of action in the trade unions and other worker organizations it had reached the stage where even Lenin was forced to admit that "we have lost the confidence of the workers". Before long, in the wake of the revolt of the Kronstadt sailors, the workers' leaders who opposed the communists were in concentration camps: the workers who eventually acquiesced in communist rule were, no doubt, rewarded with "upward mobility". The peasants, who had suffered centuries of misrule in Russia, won a temporary respite in 1921, largely as a result of conducting a guerrilla war, in which tens of thousands were engaged. Stalin's subsequent assault was mainly on the peasants, the intellectuals and the Old Bolsheviks. We have his own word for it that half a million were promoted as a result of the whole process - many, no doubt, as the direct result of having denounced their superiors on some charge invented for the benefit of the NKVD quota of victims. Of course, this is "upward mobility" of a kind. But who, with only Dr Fitzpatrick's prim summary of these years to go on, would suspect the hell of suffering, degradation and brutalization depicted by, say, Evgenia Ginzburg and Shalamov - among dozens of others? There is an unfortunate tendency in writing about the Soviet Union, to

disregard, in the ostensible interest of objectivity, unofficial accounts (on which the bulk of our knowledge in reality depends) and to accept, however sceptically, the mendacious official descriptions.

No study of the Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 can possibly be complete, in my judgment, without a clear statement of what happened. This was not a mere conspiracy, certainly (and who, by the way, has ever argued this?), and was backed by a good deal of popular support. But support for what? Not for the Bolshevik monopoly of power, intended by others, but for an all-socialist Soviet government. It was mainly due to Trotsky that the successful deception was put through of disguising seizure of power by the Bolsheviks as a transfer of power to the Soviets, composed of Bolsheviks and socialists alike. All the evidence points to the conclusion that this is what the factory workers, the garrison troops, the army committees, the trade unions and the delegates to the Second Congress of Soviets, including most of the three hundred Bolsheviks, expected in October 1917. Of course, many eventually accepted the Bolshevik *fait accompli*, and settled for the hope of peace and land - this was particularly true of the army, the vital factor in any attempt to overthrow the Bolsheviks. But it was from the decision to go it alone, fraudulently disguised as a transfer of power to the Soviets, that all the consequences of the Bolshevik revolution flowed: the dismissal of the Socialist Revolutionary Constituent Assembly, the terror against workers and peasants - it is noted, not only against the bourgeoisie - and finally Stalin's reversal of the respite provided by NEP, and his "social engineering" designed to eliminate all those who still retained any revolutionary illusions, and to provide for "upward mobility" to reward his supporters.

With this in mind, it is probably right

for Dr Fitzpatrick to see Stalin's "third revolution" as a continuation of the process initiated under Lenin. But she hardly dwells on the vexed question of how far Stalin may be directly derived from Lenin. It seems to be the case that Lenin, smitten by fatal disease and surrounded by spies, took the view that the future of Russia needed a long period of evolution (generations, not centuries, as he put it) in which the peasants would learn in practice the virtues of cooperation and accept it voluntarily. But, of course, this was the view of a man in the throes of illness, without the remotest hope of returning to power. It was also true that the scale of Lenin's terror was puny when compared with Stalin's - hundreds of thousands of victims, as against many, many millions. But this is no guide to what he would have done had he been in power in the 1920s and 1930s. Above all, the political system devised by Lenin, and perfected while he was in full possession of his faculties, at the Tenth Party congress in March 1921, contained no safeguard whatever against the power of a wicked and ambitious dictator. In the end, Stalin perfected and exploited the machine which he inherited from Lenin.

Dr Fitzpatrick writes well and compresses a great deal of information into lapidary prose. Her point about "upward mobility" is well taken, though I don't think it is very new or original. It has often been pointed out that while many lost out under Lenin and Stalin, there were also many who gained. It would, indeed, have been very strange if it had been otherwise, in spite of her self-denying ordinance of avoiding value judgments, her book is not uncritical of the events in Russia between 1917 and 1939. The villainy, the fraudulence, the violence and the cynicism of the régime are as much a part of history as the social results which, in spite of them, have come about. It is right to assess these social results, as Sheila Fitzpatrick has done. But her book is but a pale reflection of the reality which it seeks to depict.

The cleverest of them all

Ronald Hingley

G. R. URBAN (Editor)

Stalinism: Its Impact on Russia and the World
454pp. Maurice Temple Smith, £15.
08517 2237

Here is a collection of dialogues between a single interviewer-editor, G. R. Urban, and ten experts on Stalinism: Boris Bazhanov, Milovan Djilas, Averell Harriman, George F. Kennan, Leszek Kolakowski, Roderick MacFarquhar, Theodor Prager, Bao-wang, Robert Tucker and Adam Ullam. There is also an epilogue by Leonard Schapiro.

These names will for the most part already be known to students of the subject, and they form an impressively versatile team in terms of nationality, political views and professional expertise. One contributor is a former secretary of Stalin's, and two have written his biography. Diplomacy, academic work, exposure to political imprisonment - all are represented in assorted mixes, by four American contributors, and by one each from Austria, Britain, China, Poland, Russia and Yugoslavia. Himself of Hungarian origin, Urban has turned himself into a Plato of modern times who doubles as his own Socrates, smoothing his dialogues into proper literary shape and ironing out the spoken word's raw marmalade. The result is that at least one of the participants is made to express himself in a brand of English more stylish than he has contrived when writing his own books.

Urban himself has contributed a sizeable share to these deliberations, and it is he who often makes the best points. Though less given to brisk case-statement than his Athenian precursor, he remains Socratic in two respects: the steady maintenance of perspective and a pleasing courtesy. He gets the best out of his interlocutors - keeps them firmly on the hook while avoiding the sedulously cultivated underdog's whine of the probing television interviewer.

This book raises yet again certain fascinating questions which have long perplexed the student of Stalin. How intelligent a politician was he? Urban's first interlocutor, Boris Bazhanov, is well qualified to pronounce on this after his service as Stalin's secretary from 1923 to 1926, and his new contribution forms a valuable complement to his own memoirs. Here is Bazhanov still lucid and persuasive in old age, and still committed to his conception of Stalin as a nonentity, as a tongue-tied pipe-smoker who allowed his rivals to determine policy, and as an inferior mind. Few if any of Urban's other collaborators seem inclined to accept this interpretation, once propagated by Stalin's rival Trotsky. Still, a witness so impressive cannot be ignored, and the truth seems to be that Stalin indeed was much as Bazhanov saw him when Bazhanov knew him, but that he eventually turned out to be one of the most powerful and prudent of men, and the prudence to be represented in assorted mixes, by four American contributors, and by one each from Austria, Britain, China, Poland, Russia and Yugoslavia. Himself of Hungarian origin, Urban has turned himself into a Plato of modern times who doubles as his own Socrates, smoothing his dialogues into proper literary shape and ironing out the spoken word's raw marmalade. The result is that at least one of the participants is made to express himself in a brand of English more stylish than he has contrived when writing his own books.

Stalin's rivals would have been less likely to bring off this impressive, if arguably regrettable, coup. They tended to despise him because he kept quiet whenever ideology was discussed. This made them think him stupid. But is an unwillingness, or even an inability, to discuss Marxist theory really a sign of low intelligence? In any case Stalin eventually disposed of all these brilliant debaters by having them (in effect) publicly executed through his own specially evolved technique of judicial assassination; and the development of this technique required far more in the way of creative originality than did the rehashing of such stale concepts as the dictatorship of the proletariat. Unlike his rivals, Stalin very well knew that it is sometimes cleverest not to be clever at all.

Was Stalin the true heir of Lenin? Did Lenin's dispensation, in other words, already embody the full potential for mass cruelty so spectacularly fulfilled during Stalin's heyday? Or did Stalin pervert what was a comparatively humane and civilized manner of conducting affairs? Here again there is a measure of agreement among the contributors, who - with minor reservations - all seem to believe that Stalin was indeed (as he repeatedly permitted himself to be proclaimed) the true continuer of Lenin's work. There is also a considerable consensus on another crucial point: that Soviet Russia has revived - and developed - many traditional features of Tsarist Russia. Both before and after the Revolution the Russians have shown a phenomenal zeal for subjecting themselves to absolute rulers. Here Robert Tucker enters a caveat: while admitting that Bolshevism represents a reversion to Tsarist rule, he claims that what it re-created was not the atmosphere of the immediate pre-revolutionary imperial decades, but rather that of a far earlier Muscovite era. Stalin was more of an Ivan the Terrible than of a Nicholas II.

This book ranges far outside Russian territory. For example, Averell Harriman and Milovan Djilas both discuss the forcible repatriation of prisoners from eastern Europe by the Allies at the end of the Second World War. Old Allied statesmen and eagerly co-operate with Stalin, as some would have us believe. In sending these people to a certain death? Harriman will have none of it. "I don't think it ever occurred to anyone on our side that these Russians would refuse

to return home because they had good reason to suspect that they would be sent to their deaths or to prison camps. . . . At the time we could not be expected to prejudge the issue by assuming that the Russians would regard their prisoners-of-war as traitors." Harriman's overriding priority as Roosevelt's chief trouble-shooter in Russia was to win the war against Hitler. He was very little minded to cogently the pressures of a context in which Western policy-makers would have found it counter-functional, and decidedly embarrassing, to permit Stalin's impressive credentials as a mass slaughterer of his own subjects to enter their consciousness.

On enforced repatriation Djilas takes a different point of view when considering the twenty thousand Yugoslavs whom the British sent back to their native country, where they were promptly liquidated. Djilas says that he did not understand at the time why the British insisted on returning these people, and that the Foreign Office ought to have realized that they would all be shot. Djilas is, incidentally, one of those whose proud status seems weakened by his earlier, enthusiastically pro-Stalin views, which he has now renounced. That was a most honourable course, but if a man got everything so very wrong in the 1940s on his own admission, why should he be trusted when he tells us about humanity's destiny and best way of comporting itself itself forty years later? All the same, I hope that mankind will not ignore what he has to say in criticizing the West for mistaking so-called détente for peace. He calls the Western nuclear disarmament campaign a self-inflicted wound.

On détente Adam Ullam also has some forthright advice to give. "One wonders whether any 'dialogue' summary, SALT talks and the rest. . . can ever amount to more than some head-on act. . . . The Soviet leaders will cheat us first as Marxists, Leninists, and then as Russians." On détente Adam Ullam also has some forthright advice to give. "One wonders whether any 'dialogue' summary, SALT talks and the rest. . . can ever amount to more than some head-on act. . . . The Soviet leaders will cheat us first as Marxists, Leninists, and then as Russians." On détente Adam Ullam also has some forthright advice to give. "One wonders whether any 'dialogue' summary, SALT talks and the rest. . . can ever amount to more than some head-on act. . . . The Soviet leaders will cheat us first as Marxists, Leninists, and then as Russians."

disarmament. George F. Kennan comes nearest to advocating it on these pages. True, he explicitly states at one point that he does not want it at all or without reciprocity. But he clearly reposes more faith than others in the benevolent propensities and rationality of Soviet policy-makers. "If they use the Bomb on us they destroy workers together with the bourgeoisie. What sense would that make?" "I can see very little merit in organising ourselves to defend from the Russians the porno-shops in central Washington." Can Kennan seriously be asking the West to dismantle its not-so-far-flung battle line, and bare its collective bosom to the serried Andropovs, in response to debating points so shoddy? Probably not, but this distinguished man seems to have wilted more under exposure to Urbanization than most of the other participants.

Kennan goes on to propose the foundation of new-style Western universities: from which sexual intercourse, television and various other amenities will be banned. . . . during a term time. I quote this to show that the volume does not wholly lack light relief, and also that there are areas which bear a somewhat slender relation to the main subject.

Russian and Soviet studies are blessed or cursed with a vast number of multi-author books such as this in a sense is. It has dented (but not dislodged) my own strong prejudice against the genre - and dented it to the point where I wonder at Dr Urban's modesty when he says: "A learned biography of Stalin . . . will always, offer a wider, deeper and more discursive analysis than an unburdened two-hour conversation." A learned biography? Always? He writes as if there were a wide choice of such biographies; which there certainly isn't. And as if they were all on an equally high level, which they certainly aren't. Good, bad or indifferent, they at any rate do not mobilize a collective force sufficient to invalidate this new symposium.

Author, Author

Competition No 114
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than April 15. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that, the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 114" on the envelope should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on April 22.

1 Lord Henry was a great dilettante.
Barracking for bouquins like a rat or rabbit.
But county contests cost him rather dear.
Because the neighbouring Scotch Earl of Giffingham
Had English influence on the self-same sphere here.
His son, the Honourable Dick Dicedrabill,
Was member for the "other interest" (meaning)
The same self-interest with a different leaning).

2 One rainy afternoon Lord Curzon was entreated to deliver in the theatre his lecture on Fish. He readily complied, and succeeded in amusing his audience more, and instructing them as much, as any of his more pretentious brother lecturers could have done. We shall not report the lecture, but we refer those who may be curious on the subject to the next meeting of the Pantopragmatic Society, under the presidency of Lord Facing-both-ways, and the vice-presidency of Lord Michin Malicho.

3 Lord Lancer is a man of honour. He loves the arts. He has declared this love in public. He never goes back on his word. But I must be off. Lord Lancer does not subscribe to the view that poets can treat time with nonchalance.

Competition No 110
Winner: N. Foster
Answers:

1 Trust thou thy Love (this be proved) is she not sweet? Trust thou thy Love: if she be mute, is she not pure? Lay thou thy soul full in her hands, low at her feet. Pail, Sun and Breath - yet, for thy peace, She shall endure. John Ruskin, "Trust thou thy Love".

2 "I stand for monogamy and chastity. And for no talking about it. Of course if a man who's a man wants to have a woman he has her. And again, no talking about it. He'd no doubt be in the end better, and better off, if he didn't just as it would probably be better for him if he didn't have the second glass of whiskey and soda." Ford Madox Ford, *Parade's End*, part I, chapter 1.

Among this week's contributors

FLEUR ADCOCK's *Selected Poems* will be published later this year.

LOUIS ALLEN's books include *Sitting, 1974*, and *The End of the War in Asia*, 1976.

JOHN AVSLING is the author of *The Jesus*, 1982.

KENNETH BALLHATCHET's most recent book, *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj*, was published in 1980.

J. S. BASTIN is a Reader in the History of South-East Asia at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

JOHN BAYLY is Werton Professor of English at the University of Oxford. His *Shakespeare and Tragedy* was published in 1981.

GEORGE BEST's *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe, 1770-1870* was published last year.

ANTHONY BURGESS's opera, *The Blooms of Dublin*, was broadcast last year. His most recent novel is *Earthly Powers*, 1981.

JAMES CAMPBELL was until recently Editor of the *New Edinburgh Review*.

RAYMOND CASE's *The Spanish Civil War*, first published in 1971, was reissued last year.

LEONIE CARTER is Secretary and Librarian of the South Asian Studies Centre at Cambridge.

R. B. DOBSON is Professor of History at the University of York.

DOUGLAS DUNN's long poem, *Europa's Lover*, was published last year.

VICKI FEAYER's collection of poems *Close Relatives* was published in 1981.

BRIAN FOTHERGILL is the author of *Mr Jordan: Portrait of an Actress*, 1965.

LAWRENCE FREDMAN's *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* was published last year.

CHRISTOPHER HAVY's books include *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics, 1707-1977*, 1977.

RONALD HAYMAN's biography of Brecht will be published later this year.

PAUL HENLEY is a Research Fellow at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and a member of the executive of Survival International.

CHRISTOPHER HILL was Master of Balliol College, Oxford, from 1965 to 1978.

RONALD HINGLEY's *Pasternak: A Biography* will be published later this year.

MICHAEL HOFMANN's poems have appeared in *Poetry Introduction*.

B. P. LENNAN's books include *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746*, 1980.

ADAM MARS-JONES's collection of poems, *Lantern Lecture*, was published in 1981.

DAVID MARTIN is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics, and co-editor of *Sociology and Theology: Alliance and Conflict*, 1980.

PETER NAILOR is Professor of History and Dean of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

DAVID NOKES is a lecturer in English at King's College, London.

BERNARD O'DONOGHUE's *The Celtic Love Tradition* was published last year.

NISTA ROBERTS's books include *The Face of France*, 1976, and *A Companion Guide to Normandy*, 1980.

JOHN RYLE is Deputy Literary Editor of *The Sunday Times*.

ANNE SMITH was founder-editor of *The Literary Review*. Her novel, *The Magic Glass*, won the Whitbread Award for first novels in 1982.

CLOVIS WHITFIELD organized the recent Neoplatonist Exhibition at the Royal Academy.

PETER WITCH is the editor of *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, 1969.

James Campbell

Write for our 1983 List to Edinburgh
University Press, 21 George Square
EDINBURGH

Elitism for all

Christopher Harvie

WALTER M. HUMES and
HAMISH M. PATTERSON (Editors)
Scottish Culture and Scottish
Education 1800-1980
277pp. Edinburgh: John Donald.
£15.
0 85976 086 3

Scottish education has traditionally been advertised as a record of success, but its impact has been ambiguous, especially when measured against seventy years of marked decline in industrial competitiveness and social resilience. Matters have not been helped by the self-regarding nature of Scottish educational history. Its failure to locate itself within more general historical processes stems from a central dislocation. Education in Scotland, like Kirk, law and local government, has constituted a substantial element of national identity, in the absence of a sovereign parliament. It has its own ideology and its own politics, and its history subserves both. An "acts and facts" approach which regards change as being both progressive and (in the above terms) nationalistic dominates many textbooks of the "From Columba to the Comprehensive" type. But much detailed research into Scottish educational history has also been undertaken since the formation of the Scottish Council for Educational Research as early as 1928.

Scottish Culture and Scottish Education, in re-examining the "story", shows the strengths and weaknesses of this research. The contributors' awareness goes far beyond the traditionally limited horizons of Scottish textbooks, in their determination to eschew the Whig pattern of institutional "progress" instead they take cognizance of the religious, social and political variables which have determined the shape of Scottish educational innovation. This new dialectic of Scottish educational history springs from the orthodox version, which combined "progress" with this non-political nationalism to present a picture of distinctiveness assaulted but never actually vanquished by Anglicization. The watershed came with L. J. Saunders's *Scottish Democracy* in 1952 and G. E. Davie's *The Democratic Intellect* in 1961. The latter, while a bit unsate about details and about the actual politics of educational change, convincingly located the Scots' failure of nerve in the crucial decades of the mid-nineteenth century. Davie was the direct product of the Scottish

Renaissance, the protégé of Hugh MacDiarmid and of the inchoate but powerful philosophic discourse which that remarkable figure embodied. The national intellect, to both men, was neither bound by specifically domestic requirements nor a means of mercantile recruitment into British or imperial cadres, but a European awareness denied to the provincial and caste-ridden English. Davie's heir, and the link between Scottish cultural criticism and the European social-science tradition deriving from Karl Marx, is Tom Nairn, and his presence broods over this collection.

Its two key conceptual essays are Jim Smith's "Manners and Mentalities" and Andrew MacPherson's "An Angle on the Geist". To say that the collection literally depends on these two is not to exaggerate: they provide a thematic link without which the book would simply be a mixed bag of essays, most of them admittedly interesting in themselves. The main themes are two: the tension between the role of education as a means of elite recruitment and as an incubator of social peace; and the image of Scotland as a community to be secured. The "improving" ideals of the Enlightenment, during which the traditional Scots institutions provided an effective form of devolved government, were already under assault from industrialization and political radicalism when the period covered by the essays opens. Smith concerns himself with one of the attempts made to contain the resulting social polarization - the diffusion of popular education by such members of the Scots clergy as the Reverend Robert Douglas (who founded the savings bank movement) and the Reverend Thomas Chalmers, theologian, economist and ultimately moving spirit of the Free Church of Scotland. These ideologues had a difficult task; they had to defend progress, innovation, economic individualism - while upholding social cohesion, in their eyes still represented by the parochial society of eighteenth-century Scotland. Smith shows that they attempted to do this by wresting the natural sciences from the deists and elaborating from their laws, with their "solemn stillness", a sort of revealed conservatism. This was as significant as the noisy boosting of "progress" by such as Andrew Ure in defining Scottish educational programmes before the Disruption of 1843.

As in so many studies of the nineteenth century in Scotland, the Disruption appears as exactly that: a political and governmental disaster of such magnitude that it took two generations to make even a partial recovery from it. Donald Witherington

proves a close relationship between propaganda for educational advance and the battle between "non-intrusionist" Evangelicals, who want to revive and democratize the established church, and "voluntarists" who wanted to do away with it. Out of successive mishandling of this conflict by Whig and Tory governments came the breach between the "non-intrusionists" and the Kirk in 1843, which effectively destroyed the largely theocratic politics of Scottish education and social welfare.

Reconstructing the system on a more secular basis proved a thankless task. Although the Educational Institute of Scotland, the corporate representative of a high-status teaching profession, came on the scene in 1846 and expanded rapidly, Douglas Myers finds that continuing religious feuding both postponed a major educational bill for twenty years and helped defer the EIS's goal of professional self-government for over a century. The Scottish Education Department, set up (in Whitehall) by the act of 1872 and the province of Balliol men - Sir Francis Sandford and Sir Henry Craik - until 1905, had therefore a large degree of autonomy, which its secretaries did not hesitate to use. Scotland, as Bob Bell shows, led Britain in the theoretical study of education at university level (chairs being founded at Edinburgh and St Andrews in 1876), but Craik seems rarely to have consulted Scots educationalists: that such a right-winger (thirty years a Tory MP) should be considered at all progressive says something about the blinkered vision of earlier Scots educational historians. Mary Finn's essay, not surprisingly,

demonstrates that his very limited "improvements" to secondary education were achieved at the cost of more advanced instruction in the public elementary schools. In the context of this narrowing horizon the feminization of the profession (from 35 per cent of teachers in 1851 to 70 per cent in 1911) surveyed by Helen Corbridge proved less advantageous to women (almost all elementary schoolteachers) and may, on balance, have harmed professional cohesion.

In this context Andrew MacPherson's valuable discussion of the "geist" of twentieth-century Scottish educational policy provides a rationale for contemporary Scottish strengths and weakness which links back to Smith on the late Enlightenment. By the time of the Scottish Education Advisory Council's 1947 report on *Secondary Education* the clergy had changed to a secular elite of politicians, administrators and inspectors, but its policy goals were still informed by a "myth" of democratic elitism provided by small-town Scotland and its "omnibus" secondary schools. This myth grounded educational advance in an image of social tranquillity as persuasive, and as partial, as that of the eighteenth-century parish. If this process explains the relative ease whereby a fully centralized system was adopted in Scotland, it also discloses alarming gaps in the official knowledge of the groups education was supposed to cater for, and an almost frighteningly dirigiste approach on the part of the elite. On one side formal academic standards remained totemic, while for the less academic social conformity was judged more important than the

stimulation of individuality: a strategy disclosed in the final essay, Paul MacEnroe's pungent analysis of the role of Freudian ideas in determining curricular reform in Scottish primary schools after 1965.

After reading this collection, one realizes that lacunae still remain. There is very little about the Roman Catholic educational system, which accounts for a fifth of Scottish pupils, little about the influence of the rank and file of the teachers or of the main on modern education policy and nothing at all about the cultural role of the school as perceived by its pupils. But *Scottish Culture and Scottish Education* is a good beginning.

Literature of the North, edited by David Hewitt and Michael Spiller (211pp. Aberdeen University Press, £9, paperback £4. 08 02843) includes the following essays: Matthew P. McDiarmid's "The Northern Initiative: John of Fordun, John Babour and the author of the *Scottish Legends*"; Flora Alexander's "Richard Holland's 'Buke of the Howlet'"; Michael Spiller's "Thomas Urquhart and Sir George Mackenzie"; David Hewitt's "The Ballad World and Alexander Ross, Joan H. Pitcock's 'James Beattie A Friend to All'"; David S. Robb's "The Fiction of George MacDonald Fraser"; Colin Milne's "From Charles Murray to Hugh MacDiarmid: Vernacular Revival and Scottish Renaissance"; Isobel Murray's "Action and Narrative in 'A Scots Quair'"; Thomas Crawford's "Edwin Muir as a Poet"; G. J. Watson's "The Novels of Neil Gunn"; and Andrew Rutherford's "Eric Linklater as a Comic Novelist".

Wasting away

B. P. Lenman

DAVID TURNOCK
The Historical Geography of Scotland Since 1707: Geographical aspects of modernisation.
352pp, with black-and-white maps.
Cambridge University Press. £25.
0 521 24453 6

David Turnock has produced a work of scholarship which is obviously also a labour of love, and the result of many years of field-work and research. He himself argues that given the inherently interesting nature of the topic, there is a distinct dearth of publications on it. Books do exist in the field. R. Millman's *The Making of the Scottish Landscape* was perhaps over-ambitious within the very limited space available to it; though like many Batsford books it was splendidly illustrated. I. H. Adam's *The Making of Urban Scotland* was precisely what it said it was; a study of urbanization in a land where huge regions like the Highlands and Islands and the Southern Uplands never experienced significant industrialization or urbanization. The collection of essays edited by M. L. Parry and T. R. Slater under the title *The Making of the Scottish Countryside* does to some extent make up the gap, but it is still probably true that there was room for an overall survey of the historical geography of Scotland in one volume, provided a brave man could be found to write it.

Be it said at once that this book does not fall into the first obvious trap set for an author in this field. It confines itself to the post-Union period and thereby escapes the hazards of pontificating about vast periods of time for which the sources are often sparse and over which professional historians have not infrequently failed to reach any consensus. There is one chapter on "Scotland before 1707". It is brief and sensibly modest in its aims, sketching in broad developments and major structures without which post-1707 Scotland is incomprehensible. It also has the very good sense and independence of mind required to give due acknowledgment to the late V. R. Kermack, the pioneer of Scottish historical geography. Despite a long career in the service of what is known in the trade as a "Tartan Publisher",

(which lacked the grace even to do a second edition of his excellent short history of the Highlands and Islands) Kermack retained to the end of a lengthy life a combination of talent and energy which would do well to envy. He was intelligent, he was lucid, he knew his limits.

So, by and large, does Dr Turnock. He has to summarize a vast specialist literature mainly written by historians and antiquaries, but with a large and growing component supplied by his fellow historical geographers, such as I. D. Whyte and R. A. Dodgson. He structures his book by addressing his analysis to a limited number of large questions. His central preoccupation is in fact with two linked questions: why did Scotland as a whole succeed so strikingly in accelerating its pace of economic growth in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and in making a breakthrough to self-sustaining industrialization; and second, why was it that this momentous transition largely bypassed the great bulk of the country, leaving it a narrow Lowland belt of population bordered both to the north and to the south by economically depressed territories, large parts of which were and are in human terms little better than vast deserts? With the aid of excellent cartography and appropriate tables, the author underlines and expounds the process with a clarity seldom previously achieved, though it must be said that apart from his admirable awareness of the total geographical area involved, he cannot push the level of explanation much beyond the best current practice. Some of his professional tools such as "growth pole theory" sound impressive but turn out to be labels rather than scalpels when it comes to anatomizing complexes of linked events. Perhaps Turnock's outstanding achievement in the pre-1914 sections is simply the demolition of I. Carter's over-emphasis on class relations, as distinct from perceived economic realities, in explaining the way in whichcrofting ceased to be viable in the Grampian region.

The last section of this book, which is on twentieth-century Scotland, is necessarily highly contentious. As the author of a study entitled *The New Scotland*, Turnock is rather committed to a positive view of events, so it is intriguing that he cannot find a great deal to be positive about. He is appropriately astute about some of the unsalutary development plans of the late 1960s and early 70s; notably,

"Ocean-span" a somewhat naive forecast of what has turned out to be largely unattainable growth in east Scotland. The Scottish Development Agency and numerous other government bodies are currently striving heroically to reverse an accelerating and disastrous downward spiral of mass unemployment, progressive deindustrialization, and overall population loss. As late as 1981, industrial Scotland was only just recovering from wartime disruption and dislocation. By 1963, the awareness of the need for new industries became more general, and the Wilson-Heath era which was to prove the decisive downward turn into what has been called "the winter of the British economy". The government job-creating capacity in Scotland is probably not in excess of 100,000. Without offshore oil, a not renewable asset, the economic picture would be even bleaker than it is. Current regional policy, often a misfired gun, is very able people, it is the stage where its credibility is in doubt. No wonder that at the end of this competent, lucid book even a historical geographer finds it impossible to offer any overall conclusions, let alone forecasts.

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The predicament of Scottish poetry

Douglas Dunn

A piece of 1940s' film I looked at recently in the Scottish Film Archive showed a woman in a house, somewhere in the market gardens of the Clyde Valley near Lanark. It was a sunny day and she wore a white blouse with short sleeves. She raised her arms into a pool of sunlight and the lens, like the eye, could not focus on it. Her arm disappeared into white among the fruits that were unseen, unphotographed, but there. As an image, it might have been contrived a little by the limitation of the camera or operator. It was also forty years old. But whether second-hand or contrived or an image from yesterday, it had a glow, a quality of light to it. Etymologically, photography means "writing with light", and I am beguiled by that.

After playing back many times that little story without narrative, I realized how rarely such images appear in Scottish poetry, roundly evoked, described warmly but without purpose other than the design of delight or the knowledge that by doing so a poet discovers and gives. Increasingly, it seemed that the language and verse that image suggests were recalcitrant in the Scottish manner of poetry-writing. Sometimes one catches a note or two of it in poems by Norman MacCaig, Iain Crichton Smith, Edwin Morgan, W. S. Graham and George Mackay Brown, but it does not go all the way. An impatience, or a priority, or a habit, intrudes and cuts it short.

Sensuously imaginative phrase-making is not what is expected of a Scottish poet. Burns's lyricism is of the precise sort; it is direct, human, justifiable, colloquial and explicable. Hugh MacDiarmid's ghostly miniatures in *Singshaw* and *Penny Weep* (such poems as "The Watergaw" and "A Herd of Does") come closer to the kind of poetry I mean. But if some of that earlier impulse survived in the lively and, indeed, exceptionally imaginative meditation, *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*, and here and there in later writing, it was not long before his poetry deteriorated, or was in any case radically modified by pressure of politics, personality and ambition into his "poetry of facts".

Scottish poetry is happier with direct utterance and particular address. Its writers seem to need some sort of preconscious certainty or purpose before they can get down to work. In gentler poems, directness need not be decidedly assertive, and the results, in cadence and sound, are often remarkable.

O lovely, lovely, can she in
And lovely she lay down:
I kept her by her caller lips
And her breasts are a' round.
(William Soutar)

Like the Scottish temperament (if such a thing exists), Scottish poetry is not short of tenderness or of a hauntingly lucid simplicity. It is like the voice of the common man raised to an aesthetic principle, and as such possesses a literary value which is incontestable. What it lacks, though, is a restful certitude before perceptions which resist that idiom. It was noticed of Scottish literature as long ago as the day of David Masson:

A Scotsman, when he thinks, cannot so easily and comfortably as the Englishman repose on an upper level of propositions co-ordinated for him by tradition, sweet feeling and pleasant circumstance. . . . Quietism, mysticism, that soft meditative disposition which takes things for granted in the ordination established by mere life and usage, pouring into the confusion thus externally given the rich oil of an abounding inner joy, interpenetrating and harmonizing all these are, for the most part, alien to the Scotsman. No, his walk, as a thinker, is not by the meadows and wheatfields, and the green lanes, and the ivy-clad parish churches, where all is gentle and antique and fertile, but by the bleak sea-shore which parts the certain from the limitless, where there is doubt in the sea-mew's shriek, and where it is well, in the advancing tide, he can find a footing on a rock.

Although Masson's rhetoric

exaggerates the truth of what he is saying, under his peroration is a reality as descriptive of contemporary Scotsmen as it was of those of Masson's nineteenth century. In dramatizing apparent misfortune, restlessness, constant dubiety, bleakness, he seems to approve of them almost as much as he regrets the degree to which they limit intellect and feeling to a supposedly native range.

Masson's writing has outlived its influence, but his sentiment probably needed no encouragement for it to be carried into our own time. It is still the habit of many Scottish writers to accept history as an immutable conditioning of the mind. "Characteristics" have been identified and championed, codified, indeed, in Kurt Wittig's *The Scottish Tradition in Literature*, where eighteen such "characteristics" are pointed out before page eighty.

Hugh MacDiarmid was highly aware of these tendencies of Scottish writing and thought. There is sense even in claiming that his poetry espouses them, perhaps deliberately, in an attempt to erect his work as a stockade to defend Scottishness, betrayed elsewhere, or otherwise corrupted. That approach to Scottish writing, through a set of values, techniques and attitudes which predispose authors in particular, or characteristic, ways, has been entirely accepted, chiefly by those devoted to MacDiarmid's work and convictions.

To remain where Masson would have us, on a rocky beach, is to recall the poet of *Stony Limits*, the book which includes the celebrated "On a Raised Beach". The coincidence of Masson's summary and MacDiarmid's Shetland poetry may be no more than that, a coincidence; but it is significant enough. If nothing else, it is a moving reminder of the drama of MacDiarmid's life and work. It is, testimony, through the light cast by old criticism, that he spent time at the extreme edge of an idea, that he lived out, as it were, Masson's metaphor.

Another poet of the sea-shore suggests how Masson's anatomy of the Scottish mind can result in a less courageous posterity. I am thinking of William Renton, a poet rescued for a time by Sir John Betjeman. From Renton's *Oils and Watercolours* (1876):

Pool from sea,
Sea-rocks slope,
Sea-weeds grope
Into thee,
Whose the opal-temon is
Above the blood anemones.

It is hardly earth-shattering verse, but its last two lines are even faintly reminiscent of MacDiarmid. A surveyor of nineteenth-century Scottish verse, Douglas Young, says of these lines: "Groping among sea-weeds at slack water is not the most exciting, nor the most pleasant, type of locomotion that our literary history affords, but it can have rewarding moments and glimpses." One guesses that Young's condescension was the result of thinking about purpose, grandeur of theme, vernacular speed and other qualities more characteristic of Scottish poetry than mind and eye fascinated by detail and beauty. Again, it is supposition, but Renton's mildness of manner may have proved uninteresting to Young, just as that same personality of writing has done little for Edwin Muir, William Soutar and Andrew Young. They are not loud enough, nor was Muir's criticism self-assertive or aimed at objectives other than those of literary and textual causes.

Andrew Young's botanical sensibility is uncommon in Scottish poetry - the lyric of leaf and bloom is an extreme distance away from MacDiarmid's geological poetry, and the purposes to which he put it. MacDiarmid struggled with exercises of will. Inconceivable discipline, courage, and endurance. Self-purification and anti-humanity, in an attempt to answer the question, How to be oneself without interruption, Adamant and inexorable?

It is the opposite side of the literary page from the gentler disturbances of Andrew Young's lyricism, which is a poetry, seemingly without ambition

other than to be faithful to what it depicts. The contrast is made more dramatic if we bear in mind Young's switch from the Church of Scotland of his earlier ministry to Anglicanism. This, perhaps, was a theological equivalent of a love of "the meadows and wheatfields, and the green lanes, and the ivy-clad parish churches where all is gentle and antique and fertile".

Robert Louis Stevenson, too, was a devotee of country details and effects, as in the unfinished poem addressed to his wife which he wrote on the schooner *Equator*:

The wide lane with the bramble and the briar,
The year-old cart tracks perfect in the mire,
The wayside smoke, perchance, the green hazel,
And rambles' donkey drinking from the ruts . . .

Yet all his life Stevenson kneaded his nationality and Presbyterianism like dough. He was in many ways as characteristic a Scotsman as you could find; but he was unique, too: he could go anywhere without stepping out of history.

In his Alexander Lectures, David Daiches considers the idea of gentility in Scottish life and letters. By gentility, he means the polite, and the story he tells is one of Scottish writers' rebellious response to it, setting up a "characteristic" of the impolite and unrespectable in Scottish literature, as it cleaves to its national root and opposes manners imported from England and other sources of pretension.

What is difficult about this history, which Daiches relates with his customary skill, is the light it sheds on gentle poetry, in which imagery has no purpose other than poetic release. From how Daiches presents his subject it would seem that Scottish poetry is by definition oppositional at least much of the time, as well as direct, functional and colloquial, and that it must make a point. Daiches describes this side of Scottish literature without realizing that it proves that in Scotland the nine possible Muses do not exert all their different kinds of inspiration on Scottish sensibility. Love poetry in Scotland, for example, seems "characteristic" only when its erudition chides the conventions of polite society. Everything, it seems, must have a sting in it, as if it were written against the odds, complain, wink with chastening irony, or rebuke someone. Is that not as much a restriction as the censorious finger-wagging of pious kirkmen, dry moralists and life-denying respectability in general?

That the nature of Scottish society is not particularly helpful or relaxing to a writer is undeniable. But it is highly doubtful if the Church of Scotland, and the respectability with which it is associated, restrict Scottish writers as much as they did in the past. Many contemporary Scots authors grew up as Catholics. Conceivably, they have other pieties to contend with, but I imagine they read with wry disbelief of Calvinism colouring their minds. With nasty shades of grim and grey. Others are young enough to have grown up with Presbyterianism as safely distant from their lives as any other school ritual or discipline. Those who, like me, did not escape it, might resent the suggestion that Calvinism or the Church of Scotland describes them, for that is to imply that we do not have the capacity to slip out from under a tweed moral blanket, beneath which, it is alleged, Scotland is a pious, bunglingly theological, ill, sluggish and drunken backwater.

Only one speaker and no voice from the floor referred to religion at a recent debate on "The Predicament of the Scottish Writer". Iain Crichton Smith raised a laugh from an impatient audience in the bar-room of the Traverse Theatre when he spoke of "the Free Church within me". It is an understandably specific burden in Smith's case, for he comes from the stern island of Lewis and is of a generation born in 1928. Those born later, or in less forbidding if equally sincere climates of worship and morality, have had an easier time of it. Other than through a Scottish tradition of writing, in which moralizing is implanted, and is a consequence, perhaps, of a favoured directness,

that so-called "characteristic" of Scottishness which is dour, narrow-eyed, holy and sullen, cannot be blamed for preventing a purer poetry.

Where respectability impinges on a Scottish writer's freedoms is in the matter of language. The private autobiography of the Scottish working-class writer is scarred by a struggle with written and spoken words as he or she tries to write well without faking an accent which would be shameful or socially disagreeable. So much attention is concentrated on the social significance of writing, that there is little time left for anything else. Imagination becomes too involved with the Scottish and English respectability felt to be contesting its very existence. To stay close to one's literary temperament becomes difficult, the more experience reveals the nature of what is against you - in this case a disgraceful, inept, powerfully unhelpful, deeply rooted, irrational and injurious prejudice. A younger writer can be forgiven if he or she seeks sanctuary among "characteristics" and the support of colleagues happy within tradition. It is a strong talent which breaks free of that temptation in Scottish writing - MacCaig, Morgan, Smith - or which perfects voice and language within expected modes, adding enough individuality to surprise characteristic expectations, which is what Robert Garioch did, particularly in his marvellous sonnets.

As an alternative, Lallans is not quite the loyal, brave and historically valid choice its adherents make it out to be, no matter the fine verse written in Scots. It is a caricature of how Scots speak as much as is the "pan-loar" intonations of Kelticist politesse or any other voice picked up on the way to social acceptance. Lallans is gestural; it assumes a literary independence, and draws a firm linguistic line between English and Scottish literature. In doing so, it perpetuates all those characteristics which prevent Scottish writers from reaching a more complete imagery. It is indeed remarkable that in a country such as Scotland, so varied and lovely in the landscapes it offers, so little natural poetry should have been produced, from the senses, rather than from the mind.

Such writing in Scotland is seen habitually as minor. Scottish taste is not so much interested in poetry as it is in verse; not so much interested in verse as it is in subject; not so much interested in subject as it is in the vigour, passion and humour with which it is sustained; not so much interested in passion as it is that an effect should be made; not so much interested in any of these as it is that it should be seen and heard to punish society. And if that is what the tradition of Scottish poetry is, then in its favour one can point to its democratic ground. By and large it is a vernacular poetry, sometimes demotic in its moods and manners and short-tempered with the shoddy and imprecise. On the other hand, its democratic unfussiness may go too far towards an intuitive rejection of the purely aesthetic, which the loud see as quiet, the self-consciously masculine as feminine, the tough as timid, and the committed as pointless.

In some ways the largest predicament of all in Scottish writing is that there should be a gross obstacle between a poet and "sweet feeling", mysticism and the habits of a "soft, meditative disposition". Worse still is that the hindrance is artificial. The barrier is mental, spiritual (or made to seem so), the accretion of years of lip-service paid to "characteristics" and traditions. It is demeaning to be so social acceptable. Lallans is gestural; it assumes a literary independence, and



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Chronicling the chroniclers

R. B. Dobson

ANTONIA GRANSDEN

Historical Writing in England, II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century 644pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £30. 0 7100 0480 X

The late V. H. Galbraith used to claim that he preferred reading medieval chronicles to modern novels – not perhaps a taste shared by many readers in the past five hundred years. Like all good historians, Polydore Vergil, that Italian apostle of the new style of history as well as the new style of learning at the court of Henry VIII, had a vested interest in denigrating the work of his predecessors; but to some extent the reputation of the medieval English chroniclers has never quite recovered from his abrupt dismissal of them all, with the possible exceptions of the Venerable Bede, William of Malmesbury and Matthew Paris, as *nudi, rudes, indigesti ac mendaces*. By the end of the sixteenth century, Thomas Nashe, more attracted to late medieval history than most members of the large Elizabethan literary underworld, produced his famous sneer that the vernacular chroniclers of fifteenth-century London had been only "lay chronographers that write of nothing but of Mayors and Sheriffs and the dear year and the great frost". Fifty years later Milton's *Samson Agonistes* has no doubt that most historians in medieval England were positively "blockish"; and even in the early nineteenth century Henry Hallam was prepared to go on record with the view that the historical tradition of the Middle Ages was "absolutely contemptible".

Modern historians have learnt, properly enough, to be considerably more circumspect in their criticisms of their distant English precursors; but he would be a brave man who would claim that medieval chronicles and annals are actually read more nowadays than they were in the age of Sir Walter Scott. It is a sobering thought that of the scores of authors discussed in this monumental survey hardly any have ever had their work translated into English, and the only two to have been published under the auspices of the admirable series of Penguin Classics are Jean Froissart and Philippe de Commines, very typical of the native English historical tradition.

The most important question raised by Antonia Gransden's magisterial study is accordingly whether it will persuade its readers that the late medieval chroniclers of England actually deserve to be studied more sympathetically, more judiciously and more attentively than hitherto. To that question, despite many important qualifications made by Dr Gransden herself, the answer must be yes. By any standards the publication of this massive work of synthesis is a major event; together with its predecessor, *Historical Writing in England, c.550-c.1307*, which appeared in 1974, this is a book which should do more than any other recent work to ensure not so much perhaps the rehabilitation of the chronicles as the likelihood that they will now be approached with greater understanding and enthusiasm than in the past. One supposes, after all, that not even Galbraith actually read more medieval English chronicles than has Dr Gransden; and if, as is often alleged, Matthew Paris should win the prize for being the most prolific of English historians of the Middle Ages, she too deserves the warmest of congratulations on the completion of her own herculean task. All credit having been paid to the work of previous scholars in this vast field, notably to C. L. Kingsford, Dr Gransden has not confirmed, her reputation as a historian of formidable erudition as well as energy.

To impose an intelligible pattern on the highly diverse and at times positively incoherent historical writing of early medieval England is itself an exceptionally difficult undertaking. All the more commendable is Dr Gransden's success in travelling with so clear a head along the tortuous paths that lead from the anonymous *Vita Edwardi Secundi* and William Rishanger to the (altogether unrepresentative) climax of Polydore Vergil and Thomas More's *History of*

King Richard III. This is an admirably lucid and well-balanced survey, with whose general estimates of the quality and reliability of the writers discussed no late medievalist is likely to be in serious disagreement. Dr Gransden was perhaps unfortunate in that her own work went to press before the publication of the late L. C. Hector's and Barbara F. Harvey's *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394*, the model of what a successful modern edition of a late medieval chronicle should be. But within the restrictions of space inherent in such a comprehensive survey, Dr Gransden does very reasonable rough justice to the medieval writers she discusses and can occasionally provide them with an opportunity to speak, usually entertainingly, for themselves. One ends the reading of her book, for example, with the sense that Ranulf Higden of Chester and Thomas Walsingham of St Albans do indeed deserve the distinction of being the only two late medieval English practitioners of the historiographical art to warrant a chapter to themselves. Higden is again revealed, as in John Taylor's more detailed study of his *Polychronicon*, to be the possessor of a more ambitious and at times bizarrely imaginative concept of world history than any of his contemporaries; while it is also altogether appropriate that the longest and most lively of Dr Gransden's portraits should be that of the most enjoyably idiosyncratic of late medieval chroniclers, Thomas Walsingham. Whether or not Walsingham at times intensely homiletic tone and "unmistakable if unspeakable" Latin prose style derive from the tradition of late fourteenth-century preaching, it should surely not be long before some ambitious scholar takes up the mantle of Galbraith and produces a new edition of late medieval England's most evocative historian.

Any scholar who surveys an arena of literary activity as large and varied as this must at times feel, like the twelfth-century chronicler, Gervase of Canterbury, that "compilare, potius quam scribere, cupio". Inevitably, there are several instances in the course of this long book where the reader would have benefited from seeing Dr Gransden's own views deployed at greater length: does John of Tynemouth's enormous fourteenth-century *Historia Aurea* deserve no

more than a few passing references? And how seriously is the historian to take Alison Hanham's recent highly iconoclastic interpretation of More's *Richard III*? However, one would be thoroughly mistaken to interpret Dr Gransden's "Flores Historiarum" as Roger of Wendover of St Albans once presented his own – a selection of choice flowers from the graves of the venerable deceased. Quite apart from her enviable mastery of the voluminous and highly scattered secondary literature, she shows herself capable of solving some difficult problems of authorship and attribution on her own account, ranging (in her appendix) from the mysterious and now lost chronicle attributed to John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, to the manuscript history of the news-letter announcing "The Arrival of Edward IV". A similarly acute and discerning eye is often turned on the texts of the chronicles and annals themselves, as indeed upon those somewhat eccentric fifteenth-century "antiquaries", John Rous and William Worcester. Whether the work of these two men quite warrants the view that "antiquarian studies underwent a remarkable development in the fifteenth century" perhaps remains a little less certain than it is currently fashionable to believe; but Dr Gransden is undoubtedly at her interesting best when discussing the "source research" that underlies such comparatively unfamiliar local "histories" as those of Thomas Burton of Meaux, Thomas Rudborne of St Swithun's, Winchester, and Thomas Elmham of St Augustine's, Canterbury.

But whether "source research" should be a quality high on the list of priorities among those who enter such a fascinating field is another matter entirely. Nearly every page of Dr Gransden's study reminds us of the sensitive issues that lie in wait for those who wish to embark upon the scrutiny of "historical writing" by authors who would have had little comprehension of that phrase's modern meaning and associations. Here is a volume which demonstrates exceptionally clearly that when a few years ago Bernard Guenée asked "Y a-t-il une historiographie médiévale?" he was raising a fundamental question. It goes without saying that no scholar could have written a work of this calibre had he or she become excessively absorbed by the intricate problems of definition

and delimitation of genre which surround the subject. In some ways, for instance, it is a positive relief that Dr Gransden devotes so little attention to debating the possible distinctions between "chronicles" and "annals", an issue which used to engage the attentions of Bishop Stubbs and Sir Maurice Powicke to no particularly fruitful effect. On the other hand, it can hardly be denied that the very concept of "historical writing" is a modern abstraction imposed somewhat arbitrarily and uneasily on the realities of medieval thought about the past. As recent studies by Jean-Pierre Genet have been at pains to emphasize, a comprehensive account of the historical sense of late medieval Englishmen will increasingly take the inquirer into fields as diverse as the treatises produced by common lawyers and the cartularies compiled by anonymous monks.

Similarly, it is rapidly becoming apparent that the application to English chronicles of the techniques of medieval literary textual scholarship will soon have a major impact on our understanding of both their composition and their function. Although such approaches sometimes run the risk of going to ludicrous extremes, as in Harriet Hansen's recent study of the chronicle authorities for the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, under close examination much so-called historical writing of late medieval England will probably emerge as considerably less artless, and much less committed to straightforward "reportage", than is currently assumed.

There are, however, other and more familiar problems which Dr Gransden's learned survey brings more sharply into focus than ever before. If, as seems plausible enough, "history" was useful and "its propaganda was of service to the kings and to their opponents alike", why was it in fact used so comparatively little – especially by the English monarchs of the fifteenth century? The government of Edward III did find it helpful on at least one occasion to summon Ranulf Higden from Chester "with all your chronicles to speak and treat with the council"; but when at the end of the next century there developed a vested interest in rehabilitating the reputation of the last Lancastrian king what emerged was not history but the quite exceptionally jejune historiographical

memoir of Henry VI by John Blacman. Or again, if "both royalty and noblemen liked to read of later history in the chivalric style", why did Froissart have no fifteenth-century successors on this side of the English Channel? No doubt part of the answer, though itself somewhat questionable, lies in the low status accorded to historical writing by more sophisticated medieval authors; and it is abundantly clear from Dr Gransden's conspectus that nowhere in England, nor even in fifteenth-century London, did the practice of writing historical works generate enough genuinely self-perpetuating and self-improving tradition. Not for the first or last time in the history of English literature and learning we may be tempted to the conclusion that the monopoly of higher education by its two ancient universities also had its own inhibiting rather than exhilarating effect remarkably few of the many authors discussed by Dr Gransden are known to have had any association with either university, and for those who did university education left few discernible effects on the way they wrote. Oxford and Cambridge, in other words, do not furnish lengthy evidence of the 125-page index to this volume, an index which itself deserves a prize as being even more encyclopedic than the text it accompanies.

For once, in fact, the index is altogether justified: this is a volume which no one interested in either the history or the literature of the medieval England can afford to be without. Dr Gransden would indeed have met with the wholehearted approval of fifteenth-century chroniclers themselves; in some ways of John Capgrave, which apply even more forcefully to herself. "I have often written, especially to gather all expositions upon scripture into a collection; and those that were dispersed in many books, my labour was to bring them into a body so that they which come after shall not have much labour in seeking of the process." Not only for that labour, but for their success in suggesting new points of departure, the two volumes *Historical Writing in England* will remain invaluable for very many years to come.

point of pride not to translate anything in scholarly works). But Morris refers to an admirable book of secondary material; this strength of his is most useful in the three chapters, "At War", "Peace", and "Relationships", which are well organized and readily accessible through the excellent index (though flawed in the most interesting of these chapters, on Arthur's relationships, in that Morris underestimates the importance of the uncle/nephew's son connection).

The book has other virtues, such as Morris's decisive critical judgement on the thirteenth-century French writer and her coherent view of Malory, the committed Arthurian scholar who is a valuable work of reference. One's only enduring reservation is not about the book's scholarly substance but about Dr Morris's perversion of Arthurian literature by making the figure of the king the touchstone of a

Kevin Crossley-Holland in *The Anglo-Saxon World* (278pp. Boydell, 1982, £8.15-16.9) presents, in his own tradition, a series of Anglo-Saxon writings: chronicles, laws, letters, charters and such magnificent poems as *Beowulf* and *The Battle of Maldon*. He writes, "It is a period that has itself particularly well to an anthology of this kind for the supply of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts is inexhaustible, and it has been possible to include most of the greater part of their entirety." *The Anglo-Saxon World* also contains short introductions to the works which place them in a literary and historical context.

Other points of view

Peter Winch

ELVIN HATCH

Culture and Morality: The Relativity of Values in Anthropology 163pp. Columbia University Press. \$36 (paperback, \$16.50). 0 231 05589 7

Quite a lot of space on the main news pages of the *New York Times* was devoted recently to discussion of a then still unpublished book by Derek Freeman attacking the validity of Margaret Mead's account of Samoan life in the 1920s. I am sure that the widespread interest of which this was a symptom was not merely in the rival scientific claims of biological and cultural determinism within anthropology. When we learn of peoples whose customs and values seem to be very different from, even opposed to, our own, our whole conception of life is challenged. Our own practices and ways of thinking may even be importantly changed through exposure to such accounts.

This is said to have happened amongst the American middle classes as a result of *Coming of Age in Samoa* – a result not so far perhaps from Margaret Mead's intention.

One of the many merits of Elvin Hatch's lively account of the vicissitudes of ethical relativism in cultural anthropology is that it never loses sight of these ramifications transcending the boundaries of a particular academic specialism. But what kind of relevance, logically speaking, do the anthropological facts have for our own moral attitudes? It is intelligible enough that contact with an entirely new way of looking at things should have an impact on our own view of life. Still, on the face of it there seems no particular reason why reaction to this impact has to go one way rather than another. Indignation at the obscene blasphemies of the heathen is no more logically out of court than is the reflection that it takes all sorts to make a world. To this extent there is much to be said for those writers whom Professor Hatch quotes as rejecting the claims of Franz Boas and his relativistic followers to "ethical neutrality" and as pointing out that

they set up tolerance, at least, as a positive cross-cultural value.

However, the nature of the issue between the Boasian relativists and their opponents is not as clear as that last comment might suggest. Consider this key passage from page 98 of the book under review:

They [sic. certain critics of relativism] may be right that we are not led directly to the concept of freedom by the supposed fact that there are no general cross-cultural ethical principles. Yet the reverse does seem to hold. Given the value of freedom, or the moral belief that people ought to be free to conduct their affairs as they choose, it follows that we ought to be tolerant of other ways of life.

The position stated in the second sentence is clearly *not* the "reverse" of that rejected in the first. In fact it looks tautologous and continues to do so if turned round: Given that we ought to be tolerant of other ways of life, then people ought to be free to conduct their affairs in their own way. Plainly whatever an "absence of cross-cultural principles" is, it cannot be identified

with an obligation to be tolerant. If "absence of cross-cultural principles" simply means that there are no principles at all on which members of all cultures would agree, then that entails nothing about whether or not we ought to be tolerant. If it means that there are no principles at all which can be meaningfully applied by members of one culture to the institutions or practices of another, what follows is that there can be no principle enjoining either tolerance or intolerance on our part towards the institutions or practices of another culture. If it means that the fact that participants in one culture are bound by a certain principle does not entail that participants in another culture are also so bound, then nothing at all follows about whether or not we should be tolerant; all that follows is that if it is indeed the case that we should be tolerant towards other cultures, this does not entail that participants in those other cultures should also be tolerant towards us or towards each other.

I think that "ethical relativism", expressed in such terms as these, is just a mess. The deep problems that come to light when we try to apply our moral categories to the lives of people in very alien cultures lie in a different, though adjacent, area. If we understand perfectly well the significance of a piece of conduct occurring in another society, we need find it no harder to evaluate morally than we should a comparable piece of conduct occurring in our own society. But it is just that understanding of significance, of what has little to do with "relativity of values"; it has to do with making sure one knows what one is talking about.

These are problems belonging to what Hatch calls "the relativity of knowledge", which he acknowledges at the outset to be closely related to "ethical relativism", but which he does not all the same consider closely enough. Perhaps surprisingly in an anthropologist, he does not consider at all in a general way the particular, and particularly important, problems

involved in the relativity of our knowledge of human actions. He does see though that these problems re-emerge in the interpretation of the limits he would set to tolerance, namely the spectacle of illegitimate coercion used against human beings. Hatch gives a fine, strong statement of this principle of intervention – free, God be praised, of any attempt at logical or scientific "proof".

The image I have in mind . . . is that of the passer-by who happens upon a crime of violence and stops to help the victim. It is true that the possibility always exists that something may go wrong – I may mistake victim for villain, for instance. But if we hear screams in a dark alley, how can we walk away and say it is none of our business? And should we stop and help, we do not signify that we believe we are superior to either the wrong-doer or the sufferer.

When Jesus said something similar to the man who wanted to know "Who is my neighbour?" he concluded with the words, "Go and do thou likewise". He did not try to spell out what "likewise" should mean. That work is for us to do in the circumstances of particular cases. When judgments have to be made across cultural boundaries, a large part of that work has to consist, as Hatch notes, in trying to understand "the perspective of the people themselves" whose behaviour is being considered. That is the perspective within which the concept "likewise" has to be applied. But what has little to do with "relativity of values"; it has to do with making sure one knows what one is talking about.

However, though this book does seem to me to leave some of the most fundamental questions inadequately treated, it does in that respect faithfully portray the discipline whose history it sketches. A great deal of material is displayed elegantly in its short space. And the fundamental questions are at least raised or suggested. It deserves to be read.

Dwellers in dire straits

Paul Henley

ANNE CHAPMAN

Drama and Power in a Hunting Society: The Selk'nam of Tierra del Fuego 201pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50. 0 521 23884 6

Ever since Magellan sailed through the straits that separate Tierra del Fuego from the mainland, Europeans have tended to think of this cluster of islands at the southern tip of South America as a dramatic but dangerous place, hostile to human colonization. And when, many years later, Europeans first came across the aboriginal inhabitants, they found them extremely primitive: they lived in small, semi-nomadic groups scattered over a vast area at an average density of about one person per 10 square kilometres; they did not practise agriculture and their hunting technology and housing were rudimentary; they wore little more than a fur cape and would sometimes go about, even in the snow, protected from the elements only by their body-paint. It was assumed that no one would live in such a harsh environment unless they had to; it was therefore concluded that the Fuegians must have been obliged to take refuge there from more "developed" peoples to the north.

Ann Chapman questions all these preconceptions in her book about the Selk'nam, more commonly known in the anthropological literature as the "Ona", one of the four ethnic groups which once inhabited the island (the others being the Haush, the Alakuluf and the Yámana, or Yahgan). In fact, she points out, the floral and faunal resources of the island were richer than those of the mainland and, except during hard winters, were quite sufficient to provide a full and varied diet. The coasts swarmed with game birds and the sea with fish. Inland, herds of guanaco provided an almost constant supply of protein, while a vegetable accompaniment was available in the form of numerous edible wild plants, fruits and fungi. If the Fuegians' technology was not very sophisticated, this was because it did not need to be in order for them to make a good living from the environment. Besides, the natural hazards were insignificant compared with the threat posed by Europeans.

When the latter first began to invade in significant numbers, in the 1880s, the combined Selk'nam-Haush population was estimated to be between 5500 and 4000. By the 1920s, they had been reduced, by a combination of disease and genocide, to less than 300. Today there is no one of pure Selk'nam or Haush descent and the culture of these peoples exists only as a tenuous memory.

Nothing demonstrates the inadequacy of the notion of the Fuegians as "primitives" more than the complexity of their religious belief system and the ritual life that went with it. It is with this latter aspect of Selk'nam life that the Chapman's book is primarily concerned. She deals mainly with one particular ceremony, known as the *Hain*, the principal ritual purpose of which was the initiation of boys into adulthood. Her account of this ceremony, which was last performed in 1933, is based on a combination of literary and oral sources. The principal literary source is a three-volume work, *Die Feuerland-Indianer*, written by an Austrian ethnologist, Father Martin Gusinde, who made several visits to the island between 1919 and 1923. His information is methodically knitted together with data derived from a series of interviews, conducted between 1968 and 1974, with elderly Selk'nam and Haush who once participated in the *Hain*. The last of these informants, an Initiant in 1933, died in 1981. Supporting this reconstruction, the book contains twenty-three excellent photographs, some taken by Gusinde, others by Chapman herself, which evoke a profound sense of the dignity of this recently extinguished people.

Unfortunately, the subtlety of Chapman's analysis of the *Hain* does not match the thoroughness of her description. Although the immediate purpose of the ceremony was male initiation, it clearly involved much more than this. The aspect on which Chapman chooses to concentrate is the role of the *Hain* as an ideological device whereby men asserted their political and economic domination of women. But her handling of the subject is extremely weak, while her

discussion of the extensive debate among feminist scholars and others about sexism in hunting and gathering societies is confined largely to footnotes. At the same time, there is virtually no systematic analysis of the ritual as a collective representation of metaphysical ideas, nor as a rite of passage, nor does she examine the symbolic manipulations that these aspects of the *Hain* involved. The book reads as if neither Van Gennep nor Lévi-Strauss, not to mention Victor Turner or Edmund Leach, had ever put pen to paper.

Nor is it only in her discussion of Selk'nam ritual life that the author shows a remarkable lack of theoretical sophistication: her preliminary "contextualizing" description of Selk'nam social organization reveals a most naive understanding of kinship theory. Moreover, when she does refer to theoretical works, she does so in a most awkward way. For example, in the middle of a passage of ethnographic description, we are informed: "The division of labour is a cultural invention, not a biological imperative." A footnote refers us to Durkheim, Margaret Mead, Marshall Sahlins and E. O. Wilson! Similar inadequacies of presentation and style are characteristic of the text as a whole. It is peppered with elementary spelling or grammatical errors, dangling dependent clauses, textual repetitions and a number of comic misapprehensions. Although the author must bear prime responsibility for these shortcomings, they also suggest careless sub-editing.

But despite its failings, this book represents a most welcome addition to the literature: since it provides a fascinating introduction to a way of life that is less well known than it should be.

Agoraphobia

Here comes the wind with a cloud on its arm
Wafting high over these acres of warm
Pasture and stubble and joining the trees
In their spirited choreographies.

How should we greet it? Is raising a hat
Considered uncivil on broadlands or flat
Levels of meadow that fold up to where
The shape of a hill makes the wood disappear?

Surely it's spotted us, lifted above
The details of trivial landscape by love
And joined to each other by hands that have grown,
Under the weather, a lattice of bone.

Fear takes you from me like straw on the wind,
The old and abandoned nest of the mind
Goes scattering over promiscuous weald.
Sunshine. Your back's inappropriate shield.

John Levett

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